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EMOTION IN ART

SIR CLAUDE PHILLIPS.

Frontispiece.

EMOTION IN ART

By

CLAUDE PHILLIPS

Edited by

MAURICE W. BROCKWELL

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TO

ALEC MARTIN

PREFACE

The Prefatory Note to a book of this nature should contain both a brief biographical survey and some account of the circumstances in which the articles composing the body of the work were originally written.

The birth of Claude Phillips was announced in the *Times* of January 30, 1846: "On Thursday the 29th inst., at Gloster Villa, Regent's Park, the lady of Robert Phillips, of a son". To amplify this announcement, Claude Phillips, the son of Robert Abraham Phillips and Helen Phillips (formerly Levy), was born at Gloucester Villa, Gloucester Road, Regent's Park, in the registration district of St. Pancras, on January 29 at 7 A.M. His mother, who survived her husband some six years, was an elder sister of Joseph M. Levy, father of Edward, the first Lord Burnham, whose first cousin Claude Phillips thus was. His parents lived on in the same house until 1858, five years subsequent to the birth of his favourite sister, Eugénie. The house to-day has a somewhat forlorn appearance in a corner of a railway goods-yard. His father, who died in 1881, was a Court-Jeweller of remarkable attainments in Cockspur Street.

Lord Redesdale, in his *Memories*, describes Robert Phillips as "the man who was really the first to introduce the artistic feeling of the sixteenth century into the modern jeweller's craft. He was a man of the most consummate taste and culture, qualities repeated with additional intensity in his

distinguished son, Sir Claude, the great critic, the accuracy of whose judgment and historical knowledge in all that concerns the fine arts is undisputed."

His education was gained largely in France and in Germany, and in early years he acquired an easy command of foreign languages. After taking his B.A. degree at London University, he was called to the Bar at the Inner Temple in 1883. He was then living at 47 Cornwall Gardens, South Kensington, and the following year he went into Chambers at No. 3 King's Bench Walk. It was, no doubt, his mastery of Italian as well as his love of " that pleasant land " which, during his practice at the Bar, led him to accept retainers in several important lawsuits which necessitated his paying long visits to Rome and Naples. As time passed by, he came to be regarded as a recognised authority on International Law.

The leisure that he enjoyed, at intervals during his legal activities in Italy, enabled him to familiarize himself with the art treasures in which at that time Italy was far richer than she is to-day. Moreover, he travelled extensively in other countries and visited nearly every European capital, freely availing himself of his ample opportunities to study the art treasures possessed by public galleries, private collections, ecclesiastical establishments and churches. In these ever-varying circumstances he came, in due time, to write from full knowledge and with increasing authority both on music—his first and earliest absorbing interest—and on the works of art of Europe.

It is said that nearly forty years ago Mrs. Goetz, eldest sister of the first Lord Burnham, wrote from Bayreuth to inquire of Lord Burnham whether it

had occurred to him that their common relative, the present author of *Emotion in Art*, talked and wrote most sensibly on music while, she added, he possessed equal knowledge on artistic subjects. The direct outcome of this correspondence was that, before long, Claude Phillips began to write articles on music for the *Daily Telegraph*. We may instance, from among such articles as appeared at various times above his signature, those on "The Berlioz Cycle at Carlsruhe" (1893), "Bayreuth: a Retrospect" (1897), and "Conceptions of Love in Wagner" (1902).

In time he began to contribute to the same journal occasional, unsigned articles on the history of painting. It would be very difficult now to determine exactly how many unsigned articles he contributed to those columns. For those of his articles which are signed are multitudinous. Parenthetically, we may note that from about 1901 onwards, they usually appeared together with his name. Perpetually occupied with the numerous musical, æsthetic, and social pursuits of the day, on the Continent almost as much as in England, a master of languages and a sparkling *raconteur*, he naturally had an ever-increasing number of friends, and especially of men in diplomatic circles. Moreover, he took a pronounced interest in the French drama, and above all in Molière. In such circumstances he gradually came to write on paintings and exhibitions for certain foreign magazines. For so precise and ready was his pen and so sound his knowledge of languages that he wrote equally well in English, French, German, and Italian. As a proof of this we may mention his article on "Randolph Caldecott", published as far back as 1886 in the

Gazette des Beaux Arts. For that magazine he for many years acted as English Correspondent, handing over the reins about 1896 to Sir Herbert Cook. It was, of course, the Old Masters that specially attracted him, and at least as early as 1890 he wrote a Notice of the Exhibition at Burlington House. (The curious would be interested to learn whether he or the late Sir Walter Armstrong wrote the greater number of Notices on Exhibitions of Ancient and Modern Pictures which were held in the Galleries of the Royal Academy.) In the *Fortnightly Review* (1895) he discoursed at some length on the Exhibition of Venetian Paintings, held at the New Gallery, which he aptly described as "a heterogeneous collection of pictures, among which are many of exceeding beauty and rarity", concluding with the words: "And yet the truth is great and shall prevail".

From Christmas Day 1896 dates the earliest of the articles which, by the courtesy of Viscount Burnham, we now reprint from the columns of the *Daily Telegraph*: our latest is the second one on the "Adoration of the Lamb, at Ghent", which appeared as lately as July 8, 1920.

Universal in his outlook, he did not limit his attentions to painting. He more than once looked back with satisfaction to an article, entitled "Verrocchio or Leonardo?", which he contributed to the *Art Journal* (1899), on a well-known terra-cotta figure of the "Madonna and Child" in the Victoria and Albert Museum, which was then traditionally ascribed to Antonio Rossellino, and upon which he commented with remarkable insight. Yet, so sound was his judgment that he did not fail to discern merit in the best modern artists. A typical

example is afforded by Frederick W. Walker, A.R.A., on whom he wrote at length in the *Portfolio Monograph* (No. VI.; 1894). "The career of this lamented artist", he said, "was brought to a sudden close. He vanished out of sight at a moment when glory had already been achieved."

In the year 1897 Claude Phillips joined the staff of the *Daily Telegraph*, with which his good name and independent outlook will ever be linked. We may recall that the Committee which was appointed, under a Treasury Minute of May 3, 1897, to consider in what manner the Government should arrange that the Wallace Collection should remain at Hertford House, submitted in due course its Report to both Houses of Parliament. And, in the outcome, Claude Phillips was appointed the Keeper of the Works of Art at Manchester Square. His labours in organizing that Museum, arranging its remarkable contents, and provisionally cataloguing the various exhibits, were so onerous that it was not until the summer of 1900 that the formal opening ceremony was performed.

Naturally, he began to write extensively on the Wallace Collection, in the *Daily Telegraph* as also in other publications. Many will recall that, in the *Nineteenth Century* of May 1900, he recorded that he had had "the great good fortune to rediscover at Hertford House and, under the authority of the Trustees, to place for the first time in the Wallace Collection, a once famous work of Titian's late time which for many years had been lost to the world". The picture in question was of course the "Perseus and Andromeda", which had been, in fact, found by our author in the bathroom there, a circumstance which calls to mind the fact that the "Arnolfini"

double portrait in the National Gallery, " the jewel of John Van Eyck's art ", was in Madrid once kept " in an unworthy chamber which it was in those days customary to fit out with numerous good pictures ". Let us not overlook the first article, contributed to the *Burlington Magazine* by Claude Phillips, on " A Bronze Relief in the Wallace Collection ". It appeared in February 1904. He was, of course, a Member of the Consultative Committee of that magazine and, like his fellows, ever ready to do what he could for any English art institution.

He retained his Keepership until a few days before his sixty-fifth birthday, in 1911. So outstanding had his personality become, so authoritative his pronouncements on matters of art, so distinguished his official standing, so firm his position in the cosmopolitan circles of constructive criticism, and so whole-heartedly anti-commercial were his views that he would not, in all probability, have been called upon to resign his office on completing his sixty-fifth year. There was, however, something almost feminine in Claude Phillips—not in his mind, but in his character—and he was peculiarly sensitive on the subject of his age. Probably only two persons in the art world knew the exact day of his birth. It was, therefore, not surprising that on the announcement of his death on Saturday, August 9, 1924, his age was in the Press generally given incorrectly.

It would be practically impossible to form any sure view as to how many Exhibitions he visited and reviewed in London alone, and that invariably with sound critical knowledge and, above all, with kindly intention. Only at very long intervals was he

provoked to reply to some importunate correspondent who had rushed into print in criticism of our author. At times, however, such a situation did arise, and he was called upon — notably in December 1921 — to enter into controversy and, as he termed it, to " break a friendly lance ". Nor was it he who lay prone on the green sward after the knightly, if decisive, encounter.

It will not be overlooked that, although he wrote so very extensively in the daily press and in periodicals, Claude Phillips published a relatively small number of books, and none of them was of any great size. But they speak for themselves, and will not here concern us. The Italian and French Schools were to him the most appealing, as these pages indirectly prove. And with what satisfaction did he write the Introduction to the Catalogue of the Exhibition of Pictures of the French School, held at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in the summer of 1913! There we read in the opening lines: " *Le désir de plaire*: such is the title affixed to one of the paintings in this exhibition. It affords the keynote to French Art of the eighteenth century taken as a whole, and not less appropriately than to the painting could be applied to the architecture, the decoration, the furniture, the industrial art of that period." Mr. Tatlock, indeed, has well said that there were times when Claude Phillips spoke of Watteau and other favourite masters " as though he had known them ". It may be recorded that the last Exhibition of Old Masters on which he wrote was that held at Messrs. Agnew's Galleries for the benefit of Field-Marshal Haig's Ex-Service Men, and dealt with by him in the *Daily Telegraph* of July 2, 1924. He did, in fact, ten days later write another article,

on a modern exhibition, that of Mestrovic's Sculpture, shown in the Galleries of the Fine Art Society. That occasion was, we believe, his last appearance at a " Private View ".

In all these activities his actions were continually governed by a set of principles which accorded strictly with his fine conception of honour, while he whole-heartedly detested anything which had about it even the suspicion of a " deal ".

Sir Claude Phillips—he had been knighted in the year of his retirement—never ceased to lament the exodus from England of important paintings, although the majority of those exported were relatively inconsiderable. As long ago as March 1902 he placed his views on record in an article in the *Nineteenth Century*. Four months later, he wrote on " The Increasing Export of England's Art Treasures ", for the *Eclectic Magazine* (New York), and regretted that " for the last twenty years or more the gains of England in masterpieces of painting, and in works of art generally, have been greatly overbalanced by her losses. Italy, too, continues to bleed slowly but surely. If the flow of works of art westwards is, as yet, a moderate though already a menacing stream, it threatens soon to become a cataract, then a mighty river, then an ocean—so astonishing is the lust for pictures good, bad, and indifferent, but above all expensive—that has developed itself."

In recent years, at 40 Ashburn Place, his " lonely bachelor life was sweetened by the presence of a small circle of very intimate and devoted friends ", as one of them has well said in the *Burlington Magazine*, " between whom and himself there existed a quite unusual bond of tenderness ".

Few, doubtless, are aware that he had a sound knowledge of natural history; and that he delighted in flowers, plants, and birds, while he formed a collection of butterflies. A day at Hampton Court, outside as much as inside the Palace, aroused many of his interests.

More than twelve years ago, the present writer was one of those friends who repeatedly urged Claude Phillips to find leisure to select, and if necessary in part to revise, a certain number of his better-known articles, and that with a view to publishing them in book form for the benefit of an eager public. He gave to his task very serious consideration and a continuous, if occasionally interrupted, application. But his stern sense of loyalty to his Editor, his wide activities as a connoisseur and his social occupations, at times, impeded his progress. Yet he was about to put the finishing touches to the work, when he passed away. We must not fail to realize that, in a great measure, the labour of making the final selection for this publication was appreciably lessened by the fact that Miss Eugénie Phillips—" my dearest Eugénie ", as he ever termed her—had, with loving care, perhaps a quarter of a century earlier, begun to collate the innumerable press-cuttings which represented so fine a monument to her brother's work.

The observant would ascertain numerous emendations, if they were to compare the original text with that which Claude now places before us. More than a year ago he wrote to me pointing out that this might prove to be " a last book ": to his intimates he often expressed the hope that it might prove to be also " a first book ", meaning, of course that it might be followed by other volumes of a similar nature.

The only articles of those now collated and revised which did not originally appear in the columns of the *Daily Telegraph* were "What the Brush cannot paint", from the *Art Journal* (1900), and "The Quality of Emotion in Modern Art", from the *North American Review* (1902). The last named was, after some deliberation, selected by Claude Phillips to take precedence in the pages before us. The present writer feels, nevertheless, that Claude Phillips would have wished to amplify one or two passages contained in it, and bring it abreast of modern criticism. Thus he might have felt it incumbent upon him to elaborate his earlier remarks (page 26) on Mr. J. S. Sargent; to deal, if only briefly, with the art of Sir John Tenniel and Charles Keene; and, as to France, with Raffet, Daumier, Forain, Toulouse-Lautrec, Steinlen and others whose works, he considered, have sometimes an intensely emotional quality. We must not fail to note that, in the pages which follow, our author has treated of such a variety of subjects as Music, Joy, Love, Dancing, Plagiarism and Vandalism—in Art, as well as with certain masterpieces of towering eminence. We would also indicate his intense patriotism. For did he not give practical effect to his life-long principles by making many special bequests of paintings to Museums in London and in the Provinces, and leave, in addition to a few pictures, the residue of his Estate to the National Gallery and to the Star and Garter Home at Richmond? Already from the Claude Phillips Fund the Trustees and Director of the National Gallery have purchased the until recently quite unknown "Portrait of a Man in a Fur Cap", by Carel Fabritius.

The Editor of these pages would like to

express his unbounded thanks to many persons without whose aid the book before us could in no circumstances have reached fruition. Primarily, acknowledgment must be made to Viscount Burnham for so courteously allowing a reprint of so many articles from the columns of the *Daily Telegraph*; to Messrs. Virtue & Co., the Proprietors of the *Art Journal*; to the Proprietors of the *North American Review*; to Mr. Lionel Faudel-Phillips, for his kindly aid on all occasions; to Mr. Alec Martin, the loyal and intimate friend of Sir Claude Phillips, for his unstinted support, and to his co-executors. For gracious permission to reproduce pictures we are indebted to H.M. the King ; we are similarly beholden to the Earl of Pembroke, the Earl of Ellesmere, and Mr. A. Thomas Loyd; to Sir Herbert Cook, Sir Martin Conway, and Sir Robert Witt for lending, at short notice, photographs for making the blocks; to Mr. Theodore Byard for his kindly co-operation; to Mr. Albert C. R. Carter, of the *Daily Telegraph* and Editor of *The Year's Art*; to Mr. R. R. Tatlock, Editor of the *Burlington Magazine*, and also Art Critic to the *Daily Telegraph*; and to Mr. D. S. Meldrum, Mr. W. Roberts, and Mr. W. T. Whitley.

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In conclusion, we may express the hope that this work may prove to be a fitting and enduring testimony to the memory of one of whom it may truly be said: *Nihil quod tetigit non ornavit.*

MAURICE W. BROCKWELL.

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I

THE QUALITY OF EMOTION IN MODERN ART

Photo. Mansell.

TURNER—"THE BURIAL OF WILKIE."

The National Gallery : British Art.

THE QUALITY OF EMOTION IN MODERN ART

The keynote to the Art of the Nineteenth Century, the art which is neither official, fashionable, nor commercial, is sadness, heart-searching, misgiving, melancholy—now spiritual, now sensuous—revolt against surrounding circumstance. It is the vain aspiration to realize the ideals of other ages, inevitably checked, saddened, and distorted, by the unfriendly atmosphere in which it must force its way up. It is the striving to fuse the poetry of the written word with that of the painted vision, resulting sometimes in a true interpenetration, but more often in an imperfect transposition, which obscures one form of beauty and fails to attain to the other. It is the sweeping into the domain which has not hitherto held them of a thousand visual and mental impressions, of a thousand subtleties of thought and feeling. But it is also, and above all, the attempt to create a new ideal of truth, heroic in fearless sincerity as in all-embracing sympathy. It is the effort, partly, it may be, out of resentment and rebellion, but mainly out of pity and love, to face the grimmest, saddest aspects, the most heart-shattering problems of modern life; to force them, not always with due regard for æsthetic fitness or unfitness, into art; to intensify the atmosphere of tragic horror which surrounds them, to drive into the flesh the thorns which pierce those of humanity, to bleed with its

wounds, to curse with its curses, to despair with its despairs.

If there be an element of worship in the art of the century now expired—and great art can lack this element as little as great poetry—it is the worship of humanity, the worship of Nature. For the ideal of beauty, of serenity, of religious gravity, which was that of the Greeks in the great times; for the ideal of spiritual loftiness and detachment from human things—of the soul dominating and crushing the despised body—which was that of the Middle Ages; for the ideal of things divine and superhuman plastically realized with the passionate intensity and the analytical truth of things purely terrestrial, which was that of the fifteenth century; for the ideal of intellectual freedom, splendour, strength, grace, and suavity revelled in to excess—of passion tempered by, and transposed to, æsthetic beauty and fitness—which was that of the Renaissance at its zenith: for these things, the nineteenth century, in its most characteristic, its most sympathetic and appealing phase, has substituted the worship of humanity as it is, with all its gaps, its weaknesses and imperfections, its spiritual and bodily diseases; but also with its pathetic appeal, its element of what must be called the human-divine, its claim, that will not be denied, to infinite pity and infinite love. The greater realists in art of the modern time—not necessarily those who place their offal, their rags, and their vermin in the foreground, and see of humanity nothing but its warts and wrinkles—have gripped it as it is, with something of the passionate sympathy, conquering repulsion, that uplifts St. Julian the Hospitaller, in Flaubert's beautiful tale, when, clasping the leper in his arms,

cherishing and consoling him with all the vital warmth of his body, he sees the loathsome crust drop off, the poor sunken eyes turn to suns, the form and features merge into those of Christ, in whose arms, pardoned and clean of sin, he is borne triumphant to the heavens. The human-divine element is here always, without any such figurative metamorphosis as this; and those are the greatest in modern art, as in modern letters, who, perceiving it, have with the artist's power, correcting and completing that of the seer, shown through the miserable human tenement—fissured, it may be, and ruined—the light burning steady and clear on the altar within.

And the worship of Nature, too, has not been so much the worship of those divine, awe-inspiring appearances which throughout the ages have been recognized, as the perception in her of mysterious moods which to the modern man appear to run parallel with his own, never failing in response, whether of pity, yearning tenderness, joy, or terror, to him who from the depths of his being appeals to her as the Mother. It is the recognition of these mysterious responses, of the human element imported into or inherent in Nature, giving new colour, new poignancy to her most familiar aspects, which—apart from technical considerations, into which for once it is not proposed to enter—has made the schools of landscape of the nineteenth century the greatest that the world has known. I well know that, with a somewhat cheap and superfluous scorn, this view of the interconnection of men and Nature has been called "the pathetic fallacy"; the obvious and common-sense view being urged that Nature is but the inanimate lyre, resonant

only when the hand, the heart, and soul of man strike *his* music and not *hers* from her depths. Does it matter so much, after all, if this be so? If to us, the children of to-day, Nature speaks more intimately, more tenderly than to her worshippers of the preceding ages, it is that we embrace her more closely, that we pour all ourselves into her, that we mingle our joys with the radiance of the sunlight transfiguring land and sea, our sighs with the moanings of the winds and the whispers of the woods, our tears with the flow of the waters.

Not only do we know her form and outer vesture, her ever-shifting aspects, better than the greatest of the painters of the preceding centuries, but we—that is the great ones in the art who speak for us who are of their time—are heart to heart, soul to soul with her. And this is why a Turner, a Bonington, a Crome, a De Wint, a Cotman, a Corot, a Rousseau, a Millet, a Troyon, a Diaz, a Daubigny, a Böcklin, say something to us which even the greatest masters of landscape of the preceding centuries have not said, and cannot be made to say. They touch certain chords on Nature's lyre to which the ears of our forefathers were not attuned; they unveil, to those who are prepared to contemplate them with love and reverence, her subtler and more secret beauties; they evoke, under what the passer-by deems, or has deemed, prosaic, unpaintable ugliness, beauty of another order, the beauty most suggestive of everyday humanity itself, with its humble, pitiful effort, its patient wrestle, ever renewed, with Destiny, impassive and crushing.

All these distinguishing marks are without doubt to be found in the work of great precursors, who by reason of their artistic predominance have given in

isolated instances such overpowering expression to the very characteristics which have just now been differentiated as modern as even the greatest among their *epigoni* of to-day cannot be said to have achieved. What world-melancholy can be likened to that of Michelangelo? Like Atlas, he bears the weight of the earth, all its crushing weight of woe, on his mighty shoulders! Yet in these Titanic embodiments of human effort and human anguish overborne by the power of a resistless Fate, he lifts us so high above the mere earth, above its everyday incidents and the toiling ants who people it, that we perceive nothing but grey empty space, through which resounds his loud and bitter cry; and, sick with dismay, long to descend from the sublime heights to which we have been transported on the whirlwind of his genius. And Tintoretto, the mighty Venetian, who in truth, as he boasted, united the colour of Titian to the terrible majesty of Michelangelo! Can he not, while showing with a tenfold intensity the human-divine element in beings divine and men the humblest, draw us amazed and unresisting into his sombre dreamland, as sublime as that of Michelangelo himself; and bring before our eyes all the familiar scenes of the great Sacred Drama, without distortion of their true character, yet as world-events, awful in magnitude and in significance? And there is another and an infinitely captivating, a very modern, side to his complex artistic individuality. He tempers on occasion his overwhelming power of direct dramatic representation with an element of poetry, literary rather than purely pictorial, such as gives back indefinably the glamour of Ariosto and his fellows, the Italian Romanticists. He evokes a whole world

of chivalry and romance in such a scene as the " St. George delivering the Princess from the Dragon " of the National Gallery; or in that wonderful piece " The Rescue " of the Dresden Gallery. The vision in this last is of young knights strong in valour, in love, and in chastity, as they come, armed *cap-à-pie*, to the foot of some enchanted castle " opening on the foam of perilous seas in fairy lands forlorn ", and there reverently receive into their arms fair, drooping women, as pure in their nudity as the foam which, threatening, curls its huge crests over them. Dosso Dossi, that chartered libertine of the Renaissance, whose very vagaries we smilingly and lovingly pardon, comes yet nearer in such inventions as the so-called " Circe " of the Borghese Gallery to Ariosto, and is even more directly inspired by him.

Rembrandt is as indubitably the father of modern art in the one sense as Velazquez is in the other. If in the latter our greatest masters of the brush find an influence so potent that they are still, to the partial extinction of their own individuality, dominated by its overpowering attraction, Rembrandt's authority is exercised in higher regions. He is the first, as he remains the chief, exponent of that " religion of humanity ", of that gospel of pity, which it is momentarily the fashion to deride as a symptom of decadent weakness, but which, as we shall see, has for ever left its impress on all that is noblest in the art of the century now passed. He is the greatest, as he is the first, of those who have seen the human element in the divine, the divine in the human; of those who, embracing humanity with a passion of brotherly love and forgiveness which excludes nothing, make all its joys and sorrows, all

its perfections and imperfections, their own. With the magic of his genius, served by an incomparable technical power, but served obediently, as the hand-maiden should serve the mistress, he evokes under the coarsest material envelope the loftiest, the most consoling, visions; he gives the scenes of Bible history and the Life of Christ—painted and told ten thousand times already, ere he saw them anew—with a penetrating pathos, with an appealing truth and simplicity such as no artist, whether of his own or any other time, has hitherto equalled, or approached. Modern sacred art would scarce have had a basis, would scarce have had a starting-point, were it not for such inspired creations as the "Pilgrims of Emmaus" and the "Good Samaritan" of the Louvre, the "Manoah" of Dresden, the "Woman taken in Adultery" of the National Gallery, the great cycle of the "Passion" in the Alte Pinakothek of Munich. And who shall say that, with these examples of a realism heroic and sublime in its unflinching adherence to the truth which it transfigures with the glow of an all-penetrating love, Rembrandt does not attain to an ideal as lofty in its way as that of a Pheidias, a Leonardo da Vinci, or a Raphael? These ideals, of a superhuman beauty and gravity; of a mysterious suavity crowning and tempering the power that holds the whole world in its embrace; of a beauty and harmony composing and ordering to its own ends, and yet preserving undiminished, all the mighty passions, all the intellectual loftiness, of mankind at its highest: these, the world may never hope to see realized again. But can we in truth maintain that even such exalted ideals as those of the solemn Greek or of his Italian children of the Renaissance are higher than that

touched by the great Dutch Master, when, with perfect simplicity, yet with a higher intuition than has yet been vouchsafed to any painter, he interprets anew these sacred scenes just now recalled; or puts forward the portrait of some wrinkled old woman, who, with all her past history and her present hopes written in her face, fronts the spectator, patiently and confidently awaiting death. Or again, can we recognize anything greater, loftier, more moving in art than those many portraits of the master himself in his solitary old age: the bloated features stamped with the evidence of a tragic and incomprehensible destiny, with the infinite pathos of the unconscious appeal, "What is this that ye have done unto me?" but yet speaking unmistakably of one of the great ones of the earth, one who remains through all his squalor and misery "the captain of his soul!" It is Rembrandt above all who makes us feel that humanity, the most humble, the most abject in its physical imperfection, is greater than anything that we mortals, idealize as we may, can put in its place.

To say that the intense expression of artistic and human personality, colouring and individualizing artistic production, is a main and peculiar characteristic of modern art would be, again, to exaggerate a truth. All great art is the outcome of a supreme power of artistic presentment at the service of a great personality, thus enabled to express itself to the full. What is it that is the chief element of sublimity in the colossal inventions of Michelangelo, if it be not the personality of Michelangelo? What is it that has chiefly held and fascinated the world in the life-work of Leonardo, if it be not the impenetrable mystery that envelops the personality

of Leonardo, the solitary watcher, face to face with the wheels of the world, as they silently move?

It would be approaching nearer to a true definition to say that what in the art of the preceding ages is true in certain main and commanding instances is in modern art true of the majority. The personality of an artist from whom radiates influence is not only an intense, a complete, expression of self, but, with rare exceptions, a summing up of the time from which he issues, and of which, from the very fact that he is of it in his essence, he can develop and bring to maturity the dominant characteristics. Now, the personality of the modern artist can radiate, can communicate itself to widening and ever-widening circles with a rapidity and completeness which it was not given even to the greatest of the preceding centuries to achieve. The reason is to be sought in the fact that from day to day the barriers of feeling, of usage, of language which divide the nations are being obliterated; that diversity of standpoint is becoming unity; that the unity, in the great essentials, of modern life is, for good or evil, bringing about all over the world unity of thought, of sentiment, of aspiration. A Leonardo, a Giorgione, a Michelangelo, a Raphael, a Rubens, a Rembrandt, a Velazquez, all of them indubitably exercised a far-reaching influence. Their fame penetrated all over Europe; and their schools, their imitators, were not confined to their own country or to their own nationality. But outside their own natural confines of nationality they were admired rather than understood, imitated in externals, yet not truly assimilated. To take for examples four masters of the seventeenth century, all of them contemporaries, and each a great artistic

centre in his own land: Rembrandt in Holland, Rubens in Flanders, Velazquez in Spain, Guido Reni—how lamentable a descent!—in Italy. The highest celebrity fell to each, even beyond the limits of his own centre and his own land.

But can it be truly said that they had any vital element in common; that the art of Rembrandt, apart from the appreciation that great technique commands, could then make a true and direct appeal to Italy and to Spain; that Velazquez could then be sure of comprehension as well as admiration in Holland and Flanders? Beyond the fact that they met occasionally in the unavoidable use of formula consecrated by usage, these four famous masters stood at hardly any given point on common ground.

Now, in modern art, with an infinite divergence of aim and feeling, with a variety of outer aspect and technical standpoint that is absolutely bewildering, there will be revealed to the patient and sympathetic investigator, lurking everywhere beneath the surface, these modern characteristics of sadness, sensuous and spiritual melancholy, misgiving, revolt against surrounding circumstance—this effort to import into it what it never before held or expressed. And in the greatest art of the time, but in that only, will be found this noble, transfiguring realism, this worship of humanity in its humblest as in its most exalted phases, of which Rembrandt is the precursor; this worship of Nature, too, not as the awful mystery, cruel and impenetrable as Fate, but as the consoling Mother, into whose bosom we pour our secrets, to receive her own in return. And this is why—to take a commanding instance—a Jean François Millet appeals to the

whole civilized world, and evokes by the largeness of his human sympathy corresponding sentiments now common to the whole human race. The Flanders of Memling might have admired, but would not have understood, Botticelli, his aims, his half-literary, half-artistic temperament, with its excess of nervous passion and its want of balance. But the true temperament, the true standpoint, of a Burne-Jones, whether his art strongly repel or irresistibly attract, is readily perceived and judged in contemporary France, Flanders, Germany, and America. Even Rembrandt, in the Italy or the England of his time, would have been admired for the grandeur of his chiaroscuro and the sombre richness of his palette, rather than as the apostle of humanity, as the interpreter of the great scenes of Bible history, who dared to tear from them all the outer accretion accumulated by the ages, to present them in their pristine simplicity and purity. But a minor Rembrandt of to-day, Fritz von Uhde, imagines the "Last Supper" with a Christ full of gentleness and pity, surrounded by rugged Bavarian peasants, His disciples—or the "Nativity" with a choir of quaint little urchin-angels of to-day pouring out their song from the eaves, and overshadowed by them, rough shepherds from the Bavarian Highlands reverently considering the infant Christ.

This much-discussed artist, the sincerity of whose art even those who will have none of it cannot deny, at once obtains a hearing, just because the human-divine element of pity and love awakens at once responsive chords not in the breasts of his own fellow-countrymen alone, but in the whole human race.

Seeing that this is so, and why it is so, it is not as strange as it may seem at first sight that those few great artistic personalities of the modern era whose peculiar qualities are exclusively their own, not taken from their surroundings, not drawn from the atmosphere of their time, to be given back to it with a tenfold intensity—a Turner, for instance, in England, an Arnold Böcklin in Germany—that some of these isolated giants, who suffice to themselves, have taken long to break down the barriers of nationality, weakened though they are now by international intercourse. Though they have forced their way to the hearts of their fellow-countrymen, is it surprising that they still beat in vain against the strong wall which shuts them out from the rest of the world?

The most questionable form of artistic emotion in which the nineteenth century has indulged is that of pathetic anecdote and lugubrious genre. Such painters as Frank Holl in England, Josef Israëls and his followers in Holland, and a whole host of capable painters of the modern Munich school have revelled in scenes where the sufferer humbly and patiently awaits death, in death-bed partings, funerals, and lamentations over the departed. The emotion thus obtained is but a transient, and not in the highest sense an artistic, emotion. Death is after all so unimportant a moment as compared to all the rest! It is merely the colophon to the chapter of life; and it is surely in the undeciphered text of that chapter, not in its ending, that lies the vast world-tragedy! Death may be represented in art as it is in the "Trionfo della Morte" of the Pisan Campo Santo, or in the "Dances of Death" of the Middle Ages, and later

on of Holbein; or again with the august and consoling symbolism of a Watts. It is there the personification of the all-engrossing problem which every human being has perforce before his eyes. But the fading out of life of the individual, the burning down of the feeble light, may evoke a limited, a superficial and transient emotion; it is not a theme in which great art can ever be profitably engaged. We are for the moment thrilled with the dramatic force and fire of a Gérôme in such famous pieces as the "Morituri te salutant!" the "Death of Maréchal Ney", the "Duel in the Snow". But they thrill us just as a stage-scene well presented might do; the impression made—and it has never been more than skin-deep—as easily fades away. If some singularly rare and beautiful example of purely historical or legendary representation more permanently move us, it is because deeper chords have in this instance been struck, chords more surely vibrating to the very heart of humanity. Take but one example: the famous painting "La Folie du peintre Hugo van der Goes", by Emile Wauters, in the Museum of Brussels. The poor, distraught master sits with glaring eyeballs gazing into vacancy, with features all marred by the bitterness of his agony; and to soothe him the pitiful monks, his brothers, have brought with them a band of youthful, sturdy choristers. Obedient, yet, in their innocence, without any thought of what it is they do, the children quietly range themselves at his side and pour forth from sweet lips streams of high, clear song, stainless in purity as that of the angels. As he listens, the staring eyes, scorched with the agony of many days, soften and fill with tears, soon to descend in a healing rain and for one blissful

moment quench these fires of hell that burn within. Here we are moved not so much by the woes of the great painter, whose light went out more than four hundred years ago, as by the pathetic contrast between the sinless purity of childhood and the agony of distraught manhood, the empty shell from which sorrow has chased reason away; by the suggestion of the consoling power of music as the world-moving power that can penetrate where words no longer find an entrance.

One exquisite and essentially modern phase of artistic emotion is that which results from a true interpenetration, a true fusion of the literary imagination with the pictorial: not a translation or attempted translation of poetic literature and the loveliness of words into painting, such as Burne-Jones and his school have too often given us; but such an appeal to the eye, and through it to the brain and soul, as shall without conscious effort evoke, enveloping the image thus definitely and pictorially presented, the luminous atmosphere of that dreamland that completes and transfigures it. Such an artistic emotion as this is communicated by the early works of Rossetti, so pathetic in their imperfect yet expressive realization of form and their tragic splendour of colour: inventions in which the painter is no more to be dissociated from the poet than is—to use Rossetti's own phrase—the body from the soul. It emanates, too, from such purely human and concrete, yet genuinely imaginative, conceptions as the " Death of Ophelia " and the " Ferdinand and Ariel " of the young Millais, painted in his first freshness, when the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood still held him. And, again, it is the quintessence of the charm that holds us in the

visions, so overwhelmingly mournful and pathetic in their very exquisiteness, in their very singularity of strange and superhuman magnificence, of the French Master, Gustave Moreau. The preceding ages have brought forth much art that is greater, franker, more deeply rooted in Nature than his; but nothing precisely like this essentially modern product—the more characteristic of one special phase of modernity in that modernity is so resolutely shut out from it. Limitations of space stand in the way of an analysis of the great pages of Gustave Moreau's life-work, the "Oedipus and the Sphinx", the "King David", "The Apparition", "The Fair Helen", the "Galatea", and the "Fables of La Fontaine". Nothing could be more characteristic of the man than the lurid atmosphere of disquietude, mystery, and terror in which he has, consciously or unconsciously, wrapped even these famous apologues of the bright, humorous Louis-Quatorzian poet. "The Fair Helen" is a vision of her whose fatal beauty caused the horrid din of war to ring round doomed Troy, awful in its suggestion of a havoc-working Fate controlling her, its impassive instrument and victim. Where Marlowe in his "Faustus" makes her radiant as a celestial appearance—a very constellation in the skies—Moreau shows her an apparition, beautiful, indeed, yet inspiring a vague terror, and claiming that worship which is rendered to the Infernal Deities, rather than the equal passion of love. The little picture, "The Death of Sappho", of which a good many versions exist, exhales something of the vibrant passion and melody of the singer's own immortal verse. She goes to her death in beauty; and as, lyre in hand, she springs from the Leucadian

rock, the shores seem to echo her rhythmic plaints, and the welcoming sea to meet them with its own deeper harmonies. It was left for Moreau's pupil and ardent admirer, the much-regretted Ary Renan, to show her with an infinite subtlety of pathos as she lies dead at the bottom of the sea, softly bedded on the nameless things, "rich and strange", that ocean carries at its heart—august still in loveliness, and in this last resting-place sheltered and at peace.

A great exception comes in here, however. This is the lately deceased Swiss painter, Arnold Böcklin. He is at once tragic and serene, boisterous, exuberant, unbridled in the expression of joy and physical delight, yet perfectly healthful, never swept away by his own passion. As audacious in realism, as intoxicated with the *joie de vivre* as a Rubens or a Jordaens—a veritable realist in the regions of the ideal in which he dwells—he is at the same time romantic without the lyrical pessimism of the true romantic school, and in a sense classic, too, in the extraordinary felicity with which he embodies in living, palpitating human form the primeval forces of Nature. The emotion of joy he can express as no modern has expressed it: as in the exquisite "Frühlingsreigen" ("Spring's Delights") of the Dresden Gallery—a perfect embodiment of the pure rapture that attends the reclothing of Earth in her vesture of spring beauty; or in that wondrous "Sea Idyll" of the New Pinakothek at Munich. Something of the languor and misgiving of the time does appear, indeed, but in their most attractive shape, in the beautiful, melancholy "Villa on the Sea" (Schack Gallery at Munich); but this is melancholy, lofty, self-contained, full of resignation to the inevitable.

Another jewel of Böcklin's art, perhaps the brightest of all, is in the same collection. In a simple "Italian Landscape", wholly without extraneous incident—a villa placed on a gentle slope made bright with its thick carpet of spring flowers, from which we look down upon the rich plain beautified with an imperceptible veil of diaphanous haze—he has indefinably, yet with the most penetrating pathos and beauty, suggested the passionate worship given by the child of the North, as the modern Italian himself cannot give it, to Italy. His serenity, his control over his artistic and human self, do not even leave him in such a tragedy as "The Murderer whom the Furies await", of the Schack Gallery, or those tremendous "Combats of Centaurs", in which are embodied the colossal and uncontrollable energies of Nature in eruption.

Whom shall I single out from the great array as the exponents of the human-divine in humanity as it is? Two names suggest themselves at once—those of two artists whose productions, absolutely divergent in outward aim and in technical process, have this in common, that through every manifestation of creative genius goes out a great heart-beat to Man, and to the Nature that speaks of him; that they seek to evolve from the ardent and loving contemplation of Man, as he is, in his place in Nature, a great synthetic picture of the one indissolubly bound to the other, which shall be vast in its generalization, in its aspiration to the higher, the less individualized, truth; yet shall never seek to replace it by the false ideal of freezing conventionality, or lose the consoling human warmth which sends its inward rays straight from the eyes to the heart of the beholder. I refer to Watts

amongst Englishmen, to Jean François Millet among Frenchmen.

No master of the century has painted so great a gallery of portraits, has recreated and interpreted anew for the world so many noble men and gracious women, as Watts; and I venture to say this, bearing in mind the achievements of David, Ingres, Franz von Lenbach, Elie-Delaunay, Bonnat, John Everett Millais, and J. S. Sargent. Physical vitality, the actual moment of being, of volition—these things have been much better represented by others. But the entire man, his past, present, and future, enveloped by the painter in the glow of brotherly love and sympathy, this thing has never been so given in art since the great Venetians painted in the sixteenth century, since Rembrandt painted in the seventeenth. Watts's crying sin is that, in the very excess of his yearning love for his fellow-man, he must needs play the preacher, must needs step into the pulpit and thence address alternately warnings and consolations to the world. Still, his greater, simpler allegories, "Love and Death", "Time, Death, and Judgment", and "Hope", are immortal; and with them I would class for greatness of conception such noble pages of didactic art as "The Repentance of Eve" and "The Death of Cain". How can the world ever forget the white-robed, resistless Death, too mighty for violence or haste, that with majestic gesture thrusts away into nothingness bright, rose-laden Love, who weeps as he drops his burden of earthly joy, but obeys? Or "Hope", the most appealing figure in modern art? Robed in the paler colours of the sky, she is seated on the globe; all about her palpitate the azure heavens, and, set in their clear depth, there thrills

the radiance of a single star. Blindfolded and submissive, she weeps as she bends over her lyre, all the cords of which, save the one only, have snapped. But yet she harps on, in patience; for the one string vibrates still, and the star's brightness is still above her. But if the cord snap, or the star be lost in the heavens? What then? This is, indeed, a modern yet a noble "Hope", the creation of one who faces all the misgiving, all the suffering, of mankind, yet refuses to desist from striving, or to despair.

Jean François Millet has assuredly not deliberately reasoned out his view of Man and Nature, as he has so often been accused of doing. His peasants are not consciously "ambitious", as Delacroix once called them. With a synthetic power like to that of the Greeks, and built, much in the way that they built, on the basis of a resolute and sustained study of Nature, Millet has evolved all the rhythmic beauty of outline and movement that is in the humblest human creatures; so setting them, moreover, in their right place in Nature that the one cannot be conceived of without the other. But much more than this. Not, like Watts, by attempted argument, but by the irresistible impression on the eye, the heart, and soul of the beholder of the painted image, enlarged to the proportions of heroic truth, he has presented, through the individual peasant, the type, not only of the rustic, but of Man; he has shown humanity perpetually tied to, perpetually grappling with, Nature, sometimes a mother, sometimes, alas! a cruel stepmother. He has shown Man face to face with the simplest, the vastest, problems of life and eternity. If the "Gleaners" of the Louvre has all the noble,

sweeping movement of a fine Greek relief, there must be placed high above it the famous "Sower", the splendid rhythm, the solemn conception of which suggest mysteriously, beyond the patient endurance, beyond the mortality, of the individual, the eternity of life, the everlasting "*werden*" or progression of the world. The spiritual beauty of the "Angélus" has with such irresistible appeal made its way to all hearts that it need not here be analysed afresh. But "The Shepherdess"—surrounded by her quiet flock of sheep looming large against the sky—face to face, as she knits, with the great, insoluble problems of the universe unrolled before her, yet undecipherable! Or the peasant mother watching over her child by candle-light in the quiet night! Or the shepherd bringing his flock to the fold under the deep, mysterious azure of the starlight! Millet rises, perhaps, higher still when he depicts the limitless plain at sunrise or sunset, giving, with its gentle, never-ending undulations and its final merging into the sky, a conception of sublimity far higher than that which could be evoked by the loftiest mountain with its peaks aspiring to the very heavens! "L'Homme à la Houe", with "Le Vigneron", is an exception in the life-work of the French Master, since it is full of conscious revolt, of conscious protest. This strong repellent rustic, who, beneath the grey skies, labouring far from his fellows, strikes his hoe into the earth, and rests for one moment—beyond hope as he is beyond despair—has the power to endure, yet not with uncomplaining acquiescence to accept the crushing load imposed by Fate. A bitter note of revolt, an arraignment of Providence, seems to ring through the air as we gaze—the protest, less of the suffering

creature, too stolid to challenge his enemy, than of Millet himself, who for once deliberately sets to work to disquiet and affright us with the very simplicity of a terrible truth.

Puvis de Chavannes stands alone among his contemporaries as the monumental decorator who, in modern times, has first broken away from the formula of the sixteenth century, worn with too constant usage; as the master who, while seeming to emulate the large and expressive simplicity of Giotto and the Sienese of the fourteenth century—a simplicity arrived at, however, by an entirely different and, indeed, an absolutely opposite process—has maintained a standpoint entirely lofty and noble, and, for all its resolute selection of the essential only, entirely modern. Comparisons have often been drawn between Puvis de Chavannes on the one hand and Burne-Jones on the other; but none could possibly be less fruitful, unless they be made to show that in spirit the art of the one is absolutely the antithesis of the art of the other. The life-work of Burne-Jones is a protest against what seems to him dreary, sordid, and unlovely in the world into which he is born. His art suggests a lifting of garments in sadness, in aversion and disgust, so that the thorns and the thistles which sting and disfigure humanity may not cling to them. He will make for himself a paradise of glowing, shifting colour, of delicate fancies, the reflection of the poet's dreams—a paradise in which, to stimulate the appetite jaded by the fulness of perfection in art, the forms shall be those of the Florentines and the Paduans of the fifteenth century; with a step forwards on occasion toward Leonardo da Vinci, but as frequently with a great step backwards toward

the twelfth century and the great stone images of Chartres. But how sorry and empty a paradise is this world of his, which knows neither joy nor sorrow, but only the overmastering languor of exhaustion and despair! In the "Chant d'Amour" Burne-Jones has sought, and not wholly without success, to combine the beauties of Botticelli and Giorgione. Yet within the golden casket so fair to the eye what mournful emptiness, what a lack of all true passion and vitality! His great "Fortune", a magnificent piece of work of its kind, is a huge, looming Fate, sleeping the world-sleep, as, unmindful and unconscious, she moves the immeasurable Wheel on which king and beggar alike are whirled through space. Of Hope—even the Hope of Watts, sister to despair—there is no question. Doubts or misgivings in connection with the destiny of Man do not even suggest themselves; they are, save as quaint conceits and emblems, outside the interests of this curious and consummate master.

Puvis de Chavannes, even though these generalized and rhythmically harmonious compositions of his, with their muted yet incomparably effective harmonies—of blue, purple, violet, lilac, palest yellows, and silver whites—are in their vaporous ideality of no place and of no time, bases his entire art on the worship of humanity throughout the ages; but above all *he* dwells in his *own* time. He sees it from above, so that its smallnesses and disfiguring blots vanish, and expresses his great conception in visions of pure and consoling beauty, in which the belief in the human race and its destinies triumphantly asserts itself. Though in his life-work the appealing note of doubt and despondency is not wholly wanting—we recognize it, for instance,

in the pathetic "Pauvre Pêcheur" of the Luxembourg Gallery—the great French Master looks forward resolutely and with a noble serenity, from which, all the same, close kinship and a kind of watchful sympathy with humanity are never absent. In this, as in many other respects, he stands almost solitary in his century.

Nothing is more disappointing than the absence of the deeper human note in the work of one of the greatest living masters of the brush—*the* greatest, I had almost said—Mr. J. S. Sargent. He descends from two of the most admirable, yet two of the coldest and most self-possessed, of masters—from Velazquez on the one side, from Sir Joshua Reynolds on the other. Of the one he has the singular power of expressive and wholly unconventional pictorial statement which makes every subject that he approaches his own, and, moreover, the wonderful strength and certainty of execution; of the other he has the audacious momentariness, the delight in the exterior graces of womanhood, the delight also in the vigour of intellectual manhood. They strangely misunderstand him who read into his work sarcasm, contemptuous cynicism, the deliberate effort to bring to the surface hidden defects of mind and body. He prefers, as we must infer, to keep humanity at arm's length; to sum up its physical and mental characteristics, without any diving into hidden depths such as only the intuition born of a patient and loving sympathy can lay bare; to study its outward appearances with a keen but never-malevolent curiosity; to fasten upon those points which he deems vital and expressive, and by emphasizing them, to amuse himself, and relieve with a sharp and stimulating accent of his own the

monotony of the human individuality in its modern aspects and developments. Mr. Sargent appears feverish in the excess of his vitality; yet, beneath this purely exterior characteristic, he is serene and unruffled. But from this serenity no vivifying warmth goes out; and there is in this very want, this very incapacity to get to the heart of things, on the part of one of the most strenuous and brilliant artists of the time, something intensely pathetic. We are surprised, astonished, delighted by unceasing displays of inventiveness and power in his vast gallery of portraits; but never deeply moved, as at their best a Watts, a Lenbach, a Millais have power to move us.

And now come the worshippers of Nature, a great band, who have expressed more, if more vaguely, than even those among their fellows whose study has been Man, or Nature chiefly as the setting of Man. Landscape art at its highest is in this akin to music, that it can evoke a thousand impressions, a thousand emotions, which evaporate altogether when we strive to crystallize them into words. Thus, to attempt in a few bold phrases a definition of the artistic idiosyncrasy, the power to move, of a great master of landscape, of a great nature-worshipper, is to be overbold, and, I fear, to court failure. The earlier half of the century is overshadowed in England by the gigantic individuality of Turner—no figure representing and summing up his own time, but a colossus rising solitary from the plain, and cloud-crowned round its summit. He is ever, even in his first period, the high-priest of Nature, approaching her simplest and most familiar aspects with a kind of religious gravity and awe. In his second period, he takes

great joy in the myriad beauties of the world, as they unfold themselves in every direction to his astonished and delighted gaze. It is the last and greatest period, however, that shows the true Turner, the Titan oppressed by an overwhelming world-sadness. He is then no longer content to interpret Nature, to revel in every detail of her loveliness, but aspires to mould her to his own ends, to fuse her in the crucible of his genius, to extract from her appearances, that but serve as the starting-point for his fiery conceptions, dream-visions as radiantly beautiful, in their dazzling vesture of light and colour, as they are infinitely mournful; and mournful with a sadness that is not of humanity, but as it were of some archangel brooding over infinite beauty and infinite woe. To this final phase of Turner's production, the much-abused phrase, "Le paysage est un état d'âme", may, nay must, be applied, if it is to be understood. Even in this period—in such miracles of the brush, for instance, as "The Burial of Wilkie" (Plate I.) and "Rain, Steam, and Speed", at the National Gallery—he pauses, on occasion, to represent, to evoke, to suggest, as no landscape-painter ever did before. It is here, indeed, that he is the arch-impressionist; but he begins, let us remember, where the impressionists of a later day leave off, inasmuch as, beyond the shifting appearances, beyond the mere outward phenomena of the world, he, half-lifting the veil, shows the hidden depths that through the eye make indelible impressions on the imagination. But, more often, the painted vision serves less to reveal sublime beauties of earth and sky—of those that none but he has attempted to fix on the canvas—than unconsciously to lay bare the yearnings of a

great human soul, whose pain, having no human origin, can by no means be assuaged.

It is among the poet-painters of France, and chiefly among those whom, for the sake of convenience, we still class roughly as of the Barbizon school, that we find the truest interpreters of Nature, those who most pathetically and reverently draw to the surface the mysterious analogies between her moods and those of Man. With Jean François Millet we have already dealt. Corot is among the most serene of moderns; he has something of the contemplative melancholy of a Claude, but none of the world-sadness of a Turner. For him the hum of the world, the turmoil, the storm and stress of life are not, indeed, put away, but put a little on one side. His are the moments of exquisite pause, when Man and Nature are one in a gentle and reposeful harmony, when he, resting in her bosom, dreams beautiful, soothing dreams, disturbed by no harsh note of struggle or suffering, yet suffused with the human warmth without which there is no true nobility, no true beauty. Daubigny is nearer our hearts. It is he above all who in these humble, everyday scenes, of no awe-striking or romantic majesty, pictures human life as it is, and shows Nature the Consoler, the Mother. With no forced note, with no distortion of natural truth, he expresses youth and hope in some orchard-scene in the blossom-laden spring; foreboding or despair in some lurid, fitful moonrise over unfruitful fields; calm, resignation, the pathetic acceptance of the inevitable, in those appealing river-scenes in which the quiet stream flows, familiar and confiding, through banks green to the edge, bearing on its slope some village hamlet with its crown of

church towers. Théodore Rousseau, more various, more dramatic in his interpretations, has expressed in almost every phase of Nature almost every mood of Man—the serene, the reposeful, the tragic alike. Troyon is the coldest, the most composed, of the group, and his too unruffled serenity, his absolute self-control, but rarely appeal to the beholder. There are great exceptions, however, in his life-work, and among them that beautiful morning scene in the Louvre, "Bœufs se rendant au Labour", which breathes forth in all simplicity a spirit of hope, of thanksgiving and prayer. Claude Monet, the greatest living landscape-painter of his school, the *chef d'école* of the elder impressionists, looks at Nature from a wholly different standpoint. He delights in her beauty for itself, and not for anything that it suggests. He is content to stand as the admiring onlooker, to note—as he does with a magic skill that few, if any, have possessed before him—the rush of the wind through the shining leaves and over the cornfields blazing with their red and gold; the snow-scene of grey-green, black and silver, lovely in its very nakedness; the sparkle of the winter air and the prismatic radiance of the clear winter sunset. Humanity indefinably at the heart of all these lovely appearances, which he is content to admire for themselves and to present with dazzling brilliancy, but which he cannot assimilate and interpret anew, as one would who had them in his very soul: this is what Monet does not suggest. And this is why his art, epoch-making as it is as regards technique, has obtained no greater hold on the world.

Whistler, with that splendid arrogance of his, so nearly akin to that of Lucifer himself, would, no

doubt, scornfully have repudiated any interpreter or any interpretation of his work. And yet his art is for the world, and by the world he must ultimately be judged. It is not alone the subtlety of vision, the certainty of hand, the reticence in beauty, shown in these "Nocturnes in Blue and Gold", these "Symphonies" and "Notes" of his, that make them memorable things. It is also a certain harmonious and moving beauty in the presentment, which, omitting everything unessential from the artist's point of view, yet leaves a vision no less soothing to the soul than to the eye. He is the poet-painter who has taught us to see the loveliness of the Thames at night, the fairness of the great throbbing city wrapped in her luminous veil and put to rest, as Wordsworth was the poet who taught us to see its unsullied morning beauties. Save that the bard sings of sunrise, and the painter loves to depict the pale azure of the evening, with its accents of golden light, we might perfectly well apply to some of Whistler's "Nocturnes" the famous lines:

> Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep.
> The river glideth at his own sweet will:
> Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
> And all that mighty heart is lying still!

It is too early to indulge in prognostications as to the future of the art of the twentieth century, at the very threshold of which we still stand. That the art will be as the life may be accepted as certain, judging from the past. Unless by standing still it is to freeze, and become meaningless in its repetition of pictorial ideas and formulas, of phases of feeling and modes of expression, which in the nine-

teenth century evolved themselves naturally out of a period of extraordinary change and extraordinary perturbation. The attempt has here been to show this period as one of doubt and despondency that has yet not been content with mere negation; of heart-searching and of struggle, no less internal than external; of pathetic striving after new ideals and new objects of worship. The art of the nineteenth century may compare, if not in the greatness of its protagonists, or in the artistic worth of the treasure left behind, yet in the wonderful variety of its productions, in the intensity of its passionate effort in every direction, with that of any preceding period. In one respect it has an interest to which that of even the greatest epochs cannot pretend in the same measure. To those who know how to read it reveals every shade of feeling, every shade of thought, every aspiration of the time which it represents; it constitutes an invaluable commentary on what we may call the psychical history of the human race during the period which it covers—that history can never in its subtlest phases be exhaustively set out in words. The true glory of this art, when it is seen from the right distance by those who are to come after us, will surely be that, in its noblest and most vital aspects, it has been coloured throughout with an ardent love and sympathy for humanity as it is, with a true sense of the beauty that is in it, not because it may be lifted by genius, by heroism, by spiritual or physical beauty, to heights sublime above the common level of Man, but just because it is human, and therefore partakes of the Divine. If it be asked what divinity, above all others, is worshipped in this art, the answer will be the "Deus Caritatis", the God of Pity and of Love.

II

WHAT THE BRUSH CANNOT PAINT

TURNER—"WALTON BRIDGE."

A. Thomas Loyd, Esq.

WHAT THE BRUSH CANNOT PAINT

Who shall venture with authority to lay down the exact line of demarcation which is to divide the fine arts one from the other; or, approaching a task still more hazardous, to say how far the plastic arts may trespass upon the chosen ground of prose and verse, and seek to unravel, to teach, to argue, to prove and disprove—appealing to the eye mainly to reach the reason—as well as to represent, to suggest, to evoke—appealing to the eye mainly to reach the emotions and the æsthetic sense?

So long as art endures will the great question be hotly discussed, never to be solved until mankind, and those who assume to speak for mankind, are in agreement as to its true nature, its scope, and ultimate objects. A splendid array of examples, both in the past and the present, might be marshalled on the one and the other side. Ever and again should we find the audacity of genius battering down the perfectly built walls of theory and gloriously asserting itself where, according to rules evolved by unimpeachable process from this same theory, it ought most conspicuously to fail. Those who battle for the view that art should be the painted poem, the sermon, the lecture, the lesson in history or philosophy, the rhetorical appeal, might give instances enough, and to spare, which one would not venture lightly to brush aside. They might begin with the finest works of Early Christian and Byzantine Art, and go on to the great frescoes of Ambrogio Lorenzetti in the Palazzo Pubblico at Siena; to the drier and

more complicated treatises in paint of the anonymous craftsmen who worked for the Dominicans in the Spanish Chapel at S. Maria Novella; to that sublime didactic poem, the " Trionfo della Morte ", in the Campo Santo at Pisa. They might proceed thus through the ages, until they reached the touching allegories and symbolisms of Watts and the delicate literary fancies, the carefully elaborated conceits of Sir Edward Burne-Jones.

Yet, on the other side, too, the array would be so overwhelming in mass, so great in the quality of the examples—especially among the moderns of this century—that enumeration becomes as impossible as it is surely unnecessary. But, perhaps, the middle column, made up of those whose work might be cited on the one as on the other side, would be the greatest, the most dazzling array of all. Would it not include the great sculptures which in the portals of the French and German cathedrals play, and are meant to play, the double part—the frescoes of Giotto in the Arena Chapel and at Assisi; the marble reliefs designed by him, and carried out by Andrea Pisano on the face of the Campanile of Florence? Would it not include the painted poems of a Giorgione, and of a Titian in his golden youth; the innumerable inventions of an Albrecht Dürer; the " Disputa " and the " School of Athens " of a Raphael; the whole Sistine Chapel of a Michelangelo? But the writer has not the audacity to attempt in these few and tentative remarks any such gigantic task as is here foreshadowed. His desire is to show, if possible, that poetry, in its highest forms, may on occasion make incursion into the realms where painting reigns, or is deemed to reign, undisputed mistress, and they

actually accomplish what the brush, even of the greatest imagination, can but shadow forth in faltering and incomplete fashion. Visions, vast, sublime, all-impressing, and yet so definite, have been called up by the verses of the world's greatest poets, not only to the philosophic perception, but to the mind's eye in concrete, glorious images, which the brush, even of those who are most richly gifted with the true painter's power to see, can but narrow and diminish, though the pictorial presentment be the most exalted, and, in the truest sense of the word, the most spiritual. And the reason for such a superiority in this rare and isolated instance is the obvious one that the poet's image—when he paints, or causes the mind's eye, the brain, of the reader to paint at his bidding—is the ideal one, which even the vastest executive power, doing the bidding of creative genius of the plastic order, cannot more than imperfectly realize. It is, moreover, that round the sublime image thus definitely conjured up, there are projected—ever greater if ever dimmer as they go, until they reach infinity—concentric, luminous rings of imagination, enlarging the vision of solemn beauty by all that it calls up, and, consciously or unconsciously, carries with it, in the brain of the creator. True, it is only in the case of transcendent genius that the vision, with its train of thought and feeling, can be transmitted unimpaired from the live focus of heat and light that is the brain of the creative poet to that of the reader or listener, so as to evoke in him not only the image, but all that luminous atmosphere by which it is enlarged and beautified.

The writer must be pardoned for adducing, as examples, certain passages which only their infinite

beauty saves from being hackneyed, so familiar are they, so well loved by the whole world. Take this one, for instance, which one might well put forward without fear of contradiction, as the most exquisite passage in all literature:

> How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
> Here will we sit and let the sounds of music
> Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night
> Become the touches of sweet harmony.
> Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of Heaven
> Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:
> There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
> But in his motion like an angel sings,
> Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins:
> Such harmony is in immortal souls;
> But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
> Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

First, Shakespeare evokes rather than paints the Venetian garden, the run-away lovers enframed in the moonlit landscape, through which the lute sounds with a faint amorous sweetness. Then suddenly the pair, so little worthy, in their meanness and treachery, to be the centre of the most divine among all the purely happy love-scenes of the poet, are forgotten. With one swift soft touch he draws aside the curtain which divides earth from heaven, and behold, any effulgence is mild in its radiant brightness as it is mighty and all-penetrating, we see the very wheels of the Universe at work, we hear the music of the spheres as no other poet has ever made us hear it. In comparison with this vision, in comparison with this " still, small voice ", how artificial, how coldly calculating, appear even the most exalted imaginings of Milton, nobly as he strives to maintain himself in these sublime altitudes,

in which to breathe without sustained effort is not always given even to him!

And this of Milton's own, from "Paradise Lost", which is a true painter's vision, but one vaster and more wonderful than it is possible for the brush of any mortal—even that of Turner—to realize without diminution of its immensity:

> As when farr off at Sea a Fleet descri'd
> Hangs in the Clouds, by Æquinoctial Winds
> Close sailing from Bengala, or the Isles
> Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring
> Thir spicie Drugs: they on the trading Flood,
> Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape
> Ply stemming nightly toward the Pole. . . .

Most masters of the brush, and especially the greatest among them, have eschewed such subjects as these, wisely declining to grapple with the impossible; and if the effort has been made at all, it has been made by moderns of this century. The greatest painters of all time, from Titian onwards—no, long before him, the Netherlanders, the Venetians, and the Umbrians of the fifteenth century—knew, or, with no cold reasoning on the point, acted upon the intuition, that the beauty of landscape for the artist must ever be not only in loveliness of line, of form, of colour, but in close and intimate connection with humanity, of the power to express and call up, by natural, not by forced analogy, human moods in their infinite variety. It is the "human" quality of nineteenth-century landscape, no less than the undoubted progress in the many subtleties of technique, permitting of a more approximate rendering of the most various atmospheric phenomena, that has made it, both at home and abroad, in

many, and essential respects, the greatest, the most moving, that the world has yet seen.

Not, indeed, that fools have been wanting who have light-heartedly stepped in where the great ones of the earth have feared to tread. The result of the unequal contest with the giant nature—as little to be moved in such a struggle as was the angel by the merely human writhings of Jacob—has ever been that the rash adventurer has been left prone on the bare earth, merely ridiculous in the defeat of his wild frenzy of ambition. It is not only that certain aspects of Nature are unpresentable by the brush, by reason of their vastness and their significance too great for pictorial expression—even that which pierces below the surface into her very heart of things—and by reason, too, of their rainbow-hued, their ever-shifting beauty, of which even the most magically endowed brush can present but one fragmentary aspect at a time. It is that when Nature towers thus vast above Man she crushes him, shakes him off, puts off that communion with him out of which the beauty of landscape transcribed by art chiefly arises. It is thus that the representations of mountain scenery, in those awful spaces above the smiling slopes in which Man still reigns, are generally not only insufficient, but odiously commonplace and vulgar. They lack the sublimity inherent in the subject itself; they lack the intimate pathos which may give life and the higher beauty even to the simplest landscape motive.

It is among English painters of this preceding century that the nearest approach to success in the unequal struggle has been made.

No one has more nobly rendered the solemn beauty of Italian mountain scenery, of Roman

mountain scenery in particular, than John Cozens. But even he never soars above those regions where even solitude speaks of the passage of Man, and Nature has not wholly cast him out to remain austere and unapproachable in her frozen solitude. One man, and one only, has occasionally issued victorious from the tremendous ordeal. What need to say that that man is Turner? He, too, has often failed, beating the air, and battling in vain with appearances of Nature less realizable in their wondrous vastness and beauty than dreams. But he has, too, in his happiest moments, been a conqueror where no mortal has succeeded before him: perhaps because in representing the clash of the elements in awful strife, in piling one great Alp on the other, in striving to perpetuate on his canvas the earth in its fairest as well as in its most sombre vesture of cloud and mist, he has stamped upon his subject not only its own inherent sublimity, but the sublimity of his own endeavour, the greatness of his own artistic individuality.

Another English painter, one whom the hypercritical might declare to be not a landscape-painter at all, has evoked, less to the eye, indeed, than through it to the mind, the noblest visions—and that in connection with aspects of Nature which, if they had been approached from the purely pictorial standpoint, might well have appeared untranslatable. This painter is Watts. Of such a contention let his "Return of the Dove to the Ark", his "Carrara Mountains", above all his "Mount Ararat", be the proof. In this last-named beautiful piece the brightness of starlit night reveals in naked majesty sharp unapproachable peaks, aspiring to the very skies. But, above and around all, the whole canopy

of heaven shines in a softened splendour, indefinitely suggesting the eternal watch of the Divine Omniscience—taking from the awful scene something of its solitary character, and bringing it nearer to our comprehension, to our sympathies.

This landscape of the East, in which Victor Hugo sets his Ruth watching at the feet of the sleeping Boaz—in " Boaz endormi "—is nearer to earth, and yet how much of its rare beauty must evaporate if even the greatest master of Oriental landscape should seek to perpetuate it on his canvas!

> Tout reposait dans Ur et dans Jerimadeth,
> Les astres émaillaient le ciel profond et sombre,
> Le croissant fin et clair parmi ces fleurs de l'ombre
> Brillait à l'occident; et Ruth se demandait,
> Immobile, ouvrant l'œil à moitié sous ses voiles,
> Quel dieu, quel moissonneur de l'éternel été,
> Avait, en s'en allant, négligemment jeté
> Cette faucille d'or dans le champ des étoiles.

Manet, the French painter among those orientalists who, with a lyric passion so truly vibrating, have evoked the East, and expressed its mysterious attraction, might have painted the landscape—the rich cornfields, paling from gold to silver under the rays of the moon, the fathomless blue, jewelled with stars and lit by the bright sickle in the skies, the motionless pair enframed in all this beauty. But how to express with the brush the silence of the night, the pause in Nature, or to show the woman as she interrogates the stars, at the turning-point of her destiny, face to face with eternity unfolding like a chart, yet undecipherable.

But when they come to the dear earth and take it in a close loving embrace, the poet and the poet-painter are on more equal terms, though even now

the victory can hardly be said to be with the limner over the poet.

Where has Constable, or Corot, or Daubigny painted more exquisitely, with a more subtle perception of Nature's outward beauties and what is beneath them, than Tennyson does, in the "Gardener's Daughter":

> Not wholly in the busy world, nor quite
> Beyond it, blooms the garden that I love.
> News from the humming city comes to it
> In sound of funeral or of marriage bells;
> And, sitting muffled in dark leaves, you hear
> The windy clanging of the minster clock;
> Although between it and the garden lies
> A league of grass, wash'd by a slow broad stream,
> That, stirr'd with languid pulses of the oar,
> Waves all its lazy lilies, and creeps on,
> Barge-laden, to three arches of a bridge
> Crown'd with the minster-towers.

By these lines we are not so much reminded of a consciously idealized presentment, such as the great "Walton Bridge" (Plate II.) of Turner, or of some splendidly robust piece of painted prose by Constable, as of a far-stretching river-scene by De Wint, with many windings of a gentle stream through grass and cornfields and rich leafage of sombre woods. And yet, when we consider, the true beauty of the word-picture lies in its tender expression of Man's union with Nature in these her familiar aspects, which are in a measure his own creation. Here, although we are a little away from the hum of the busy city, there is everywhere a sense of Man and Man's work—in every whisper of the leaves, as in every murmur of the slow-winding stream, his obedient servant. And the tender

moving beauty with a haunting sense of misgiving and apprehension beneath it, such as is at the heart of the modern man, no English painter has expressed as some Frenchmen—a Rousseau, a Millet, a Corot, or a Daubigny, for instance—have expressed it. We think in reading Tennyson here of this quiet river-scene of Daubigny, with grassy banks upon which nestles some village, with its crown of church towers and its trees winding along in unison with the course of the stream. And such are surely the scenes that the men who are born and bred in these lands where the sun's brightness is tempered and veiled must mainly love, although they may in wondering delight contemplate others more varied and more splendid in beauty. It is these banks that have echoed to their laughter, with these waters that their tears have been mingled; it is these trees that have joined their soothing whispers to their sighs, and in this quiet earth that their bones will one day lie at rest.

Keats, too, in the familiar lines of " La Belle Dame Sans Merci "—

> The sedge is withered from the lake,
> And no birds sing—

sums up the whole world of outward desolation and inward misery; as hardly any poet-painter of them all has done—not Millais in his " Chill October ", not even Théodore Rousseau or Diaz, painting the festering herbage on some dank pool of the forest, walled in by trees from which the last sere leaves drop in the silence, one by one.

The word-painting of the poet gives as definite a vision as that which arises from the brushwork of the painters, since inevitably, and without effort on

the part of the reader, it evokes the rest, giving the solitary autumn landscape in its essence without disturbing incident or detail. And the wail of misery envelops it all like a sad winter wind. The wail of the painters, too, over the death of the year, makes itself felt in their landscapes, enfolding them in an atmosphere of mournful tenderness and resignation. But the ear must be more finely attuned that hears the note; or if you will, the eye that defines the man and his mood beneath his work must be one that pierces more deeply below the surface into the heart of things.

Some of the most exquisite enjoyments that poetry and the plastic arts afford to those who are open to their influence are contained in the happy moments in which they join hands, and joining, are married to music, as the chief factor and exponent, to produce a whole, the beauty, the power to impress of which is not to be accounted for even by the beauty, the imaginative power of the component parts taken singly. It is in the great music dramas of Wagner that this combination of the creative arts is best to be studied, since his whole system depends upon their indissoluble conjunction, and his " new art ", more or less perfectly realized in his own works, is entirely based upon this conjunction. It is not drama expressed and reinforced by music, as in Gluck; it is not merely dramatic music suggested by the stimulus of poetic drama; it is music and dramatic poetry created step by step, in conjunction with each other—the one not imaginable without the other, and the two welded together into a whole that is greater in its power of expression than either singly, or even than the sum of both merely added together. It is, moreover, this new form of dramatic

expression, still further enhanced and enframed in the plastic art of the stage, which, in this its higher and most significant phase, not only affords an appropriate setting to the music drama—a world within which it moves — but much more than this, since it serves to still further and more subtly to express and emphasize its more intimate beauties.

Numberless instances might be given, but one or two shall suffice. In the first act of "Die Walküre" Fate has drawn together Siegmund, the hapless Wälsung, and Sieglinde, his sister, the children of Wotan by a daughter of earth. Full of foreboding, having no delight in the passion which gradually invades them, they stand, sombre and downcast in soul, beneath the roof-tree of the rough-hewn barbaric dwelling which is the abode of suspicion and hate. Of a sudden, the great prison-like doors are flung open by an unseen hand, and the all-invading beauty of the spring, revealed in the glory of the moonlit night, is upon the lovers, sweeping them away, powerless any longer to resist, compelled by Nature to an utter surrender to the joy and tenderness of the moment so soon to be paid for with overwhelming disaster and death.

This situation which spoken passion could but imperfectly reveal, without the magic current of the music, following the very life-current of the blood, laying bare every fitful change of the soul, is one, moreover, which no brush, however great, could by itself realize. But art, the plastic art of the stage—in which unfortunately sensational splendour rather than true significance and expressiveness is at present valued—can nevertheless, if it be in close agreement with its sister powers, still further develop the

dramatic beauty and force of a situation which without it would lose half its intensity.

Another and even more striking instance is to be found in the climax of the second act of Wagner's "Siegfried". The boy hero, led by the noisome dwarf Mime, winds his way from the dense tangle of the forest and reaches, at its very limit, the cave of the treasure-guarding dragon, "Fafner", the spot beyond which the horror and darkness end and the bright world of light and love begins. In this new atmosphere of flickering brightness and tender shadow he dreams, sadly yet with less of bitterness than in the vile cave of Mime, of his mother, Sieglinde, dying as she gave birth to him, and vaguely too—with a new kindled love of mankind and Nature—of the fair world. Victorious over the dragon, and made wise by the taste of his blood, Siegfried, now hearing and comprehending the note of warning in the sweet song of the bird, with one great gesture of distaste and loathing, slays the vile Nibelung and greets the world, radiant and pure at last, since it is no longer tainted by the poison of his presence. Now, lying trustfully in the loving embrace of Nature, he lets the murmurs of the forest mingle with his very being. But the bird sings of Brünnhilde, the peerless, laid to sleep on the inaccessible rock, girt round with flame; and a new fire is at the hero's heart.

Following the flight of the bird he must go onwards, over the rocks and through the forest, beneath changeful sunshine and shadow, out into the world; and ever onwards, until the flame-crowned rock is reached, and in the presence of the goddess delivered and subdued to a lovelier womanhood, he, the dauntless, at length knows the fear that no danger

can inspire. Here the words are few and of no high import, the music is the very voice of Nature in its deepest as in its sweetest notes; it is also the innermost soul of man awakening as she reveals herself to him. But here again, without the framework of beauty that the finer and more delicate art of the stage can and should provide, the deepest significance of the situation must remain obscured.

We *must* have, to express the radiant beauty of the young hero's unspotted soul, to suggest the purity of the fire which suddenly flames up within him, the glow of the sunlight, its sheaf of golden arrows darting through the overarching canopy of leaves; we *must* have the wholesome, vivifying atmosphere of the world of Man, as it opens out to the godlike youth, who goes on his way to conquer and then to die—but to die the only blameless victim of the Nibelungs' Curse on the Ring.

One more instance may be cited, and that is one in which the fairy drama is Shakespeare, the music Mendelssohn's, and the true artistic framing—so far as England is concerned—is yet to come, but when it does come will show, " The Midsummer Night's Dream ", a jewel far the richer and brighter for its setting. We are at the close of the third act, in the haunted wood near Athens. The hapless lovers, plagued first by their own fancies, then by the sharp-pointed malice of Puck, have, in sheer exhaustion, ceased their fretful bickerings, their railings, their upbraiding, and, all unconscious the one of the other's presence, have lain them down to rest on the bare earth. Lysander and Demetrius, Helena and Hermia, are at last at peace. A little more, and their fancied yet very real woes would too painfully move us, and the charm, the airy lightness of the

dream, would vanish. But the magic of the poet prevails: we cannot overmuch pity, since he makes us feel that when the awakening comes all will be well; that the dream-comedy will henceforth move forward in an atmosphere of appeasement, of love no longer twisted awry, but turned back to the straight path. It is here—as in the wonderful dying away of the play at the close—that the musician has crept into the very heart of the poet and divinely interpreted his innermost thoughts. It is here—as in many other passages too, in the dramatic poem—that the arts may fitly join to express what no one of them can to the full express unaided. Upon the repose of the lovers there shines out again, or should shine out, by degrees from the fairy haunted wood, the mild effulgence of the moon lighting into a luminous half-dark its sheltering thickets, and making clear to the spectator what the sleepers as yet know not, yet unconsciously feel—the healing proximity of the sorely plagued lovers to each other. Then, telling still more surely of appeasement and joy to come, steals forth the first lovely horn phrase of Mendelssohn's Notturno, and with the beautiful night-piece in soothing calm and sweetness unruffled proceeds, the curtain descends, and the act is at an end.

In life, these bright spots, in which the purely human beauty of life is concentrated in an ideal form, yet one built firmly on a basis of reality, are so many oases in a great dreary desert. If we weep for anything, let us weep for this: that stretching out faltering hands to reach, not heights as distant and cold in their awful remoteness as they are overwhelming in their rainbow-hued glory, but these ideals of purely human beauty heard by and seem-

ingly within the grasp of all, we find but darkness and emptiness. The light has suddenly vanished and the darkness is upon us again.

Are we the weak ones who dare not face the tremendous majesty of the " Makrocosmos ", not worthy to look even upon the " Erdgeist ", the " Spirit of Earth ", in that most fair and consoling aspect which appears nearest to us, and most naturally within our reach?

Yet we may have the consolation that these oases of pure human delight which in life are bright, ephemeral lights set in dark, unending wastes, are in art islands of luminous beauty set in space only less luminous. And they are not lights which burn low, or, flashing out brightly, vanish like meteors into the night, but centres of vital warmth and enduring radiance, the true essence of what we yearn for, yet cannot firmly hold in life. To such oases of purely human beauty, and light tempered so as to gladden yet not to sear mortal eyes, as they are to be found in the immortal inventions of art deeply rooted in Nature, and representing her finest essence, let us turn again and again, when the accidental and superficial realities of life leave us saddened and disconcerted. For are not these—these beyond all the dazzling dream-visions of the imagination—the true Isles of the Blessed, the true refuge of Man?

III

THE NATIVITY IN ART

Photo Anderson.

GENTILE DA FABRIANO—"THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI."

The Uffizi, Florence.

THE NATIVITY IN ART

At this time of solemn gladness and contemplation, when there should be a moment's hush and pause in the opposing clash of the peoples, when the everyday business of the world should not hold us wholly bound in its meshes, we may naturally be led to consider the works of the old masters in the domain of sacred art, and to compare, regretfully, what they have in successive epochs brought forth in that, the greatest of all fields for the artist of lofty enthusiasms and passionate sincerity, with the little that our modern painters —even the greatest of them—have been permitted to accomplish in the same direction. But yet let us not over-hastily, after such a comparison, pass too harsh and absolute a sentence of condemnation upon our moderns, failing to bear in mind the crushing difficulties which have stood in their way, especially in England. Where are those fair wall-spaces upon which, in the bright even hues of fresco, the Italians of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries sought to realize the awful solemnity of the Last Judgment, the naïve joys of Paradise, the physical tortures of a hell after Dante's conception, vast allegories of Church and State, the life of Christ, unfolded scene by scene, the culminating episodes of the Passion, the histories of Prophets and Apostles? Where are the altars and the chapels for which they, as well as their Netherlandish and German contemporaries, with an inconceivable wealth of detail which yet did not quench the fire of inspira-

tion, were wont to depict the " Holy Family ", the " Nativity ", the " Adoration of the Magi ", the " Repose in Egypt ", the martyrdom and glory of innumerable saints? It may be that the modern artist finds himself now and again drawn by temperament towards the still unexhausted field of sacred art, feeling within himself the power to create anew the enthralling scenes of the sacred drama, so that they shall have a present import for all, as well as a purely ritual significance, or an interest chiefly historical and archæological. If he gives form to his aspirations he knows that he does so at his own risk, and that it is only some provincial museum or private chapel that will be likely to offer a resting-place to his canvas. In one branch of pictorial art only does the English artist with such leanings as these find scope for his powers. We refer to the preparation of cartoons for the stained-glass windows of churches. Here, however, perfect freedom of design, or perfect freedom of conception in response to the spiritual cravings of the time, is in the nature of things impossible. The mullioned windows have as a rule retained the architectural forms developed during the past ages, and the pictures which they enframe must to a certain extent receive the treatment consecrated by immemorial usage. Notwithstanding this hindrance, English painters have here accomplished much, and not always as slavish imitators of their forerunners; foremost among them being that most ingenious of modern decorative artists, Sir E. Burne-Jones, who, even where he fails to move or to convince those who judge his works of this class from the highest standpoint, finds means to appeal to the purely æsthetic sense.

Let us, where so many subjects tempt us, take

the one which most naturally suggests itself at the moment when we write—that lowly one of the Nativity, of so vital an import to humanity, in the past as in the present, that before it all scenes of merely ritual pomp and splendour must pale. Let us see how the ages have treated it, and how it has been interpreted by the few modern painters of renown who have ventured upon this ground. In the first place, the Nativity, or Adoration of the Shepherds, has been much less frequently treated in art than we should, perhaps, have imagined. That kindred subject, "The Adoration of the Magi", so much more suitable for the display of the wonderful finish in costumes and accessories which belongs especially to the fifteenth century, has far outstripped it in popularity, and for obvious reasons. Where chapels, shrines, and altars rivalled each other in artistic wealth and dazzling show, where the frames of the altar-pieces were themselves often marvels of carving, modelling, and gilding, it was necessary that the panels thus sumptuously set should equal their surroundings in material splendour. Both north and south of the Alps the "Adoration of the Magi" may be said to have been, after the "Holy Family" and the endless variations of the "Sacred Conversation", the favourite subject of painters. Let us take almost at random a few of the most characteristic versions known to the world, beginning with that famous one (Plate III.) from the brush of the Umbrian Gentile da Fabriano,[1] with its endless train of splendidly robed kings and nobles, of sumptuously furnished steeds and beasts of burden. Or, again, Benozzo Gozzoli's not less famous

[1] Formerly in the Accademia delle Belle Arti of Florence, but now in the Uffizi.

frescoes in the chapel of the Riccardi Palace; or Botticelli's celebrated panel with the portraits of the Medici family in the Uffizi. A vast work of Filippino Lippi's late time, in the same gallery, shows him revelling in the opportunities provided by the more pompous "Adoration", and near it is hung Leonardo's unfinished rendering of the same scene, so captivating to the painter—a work, enigmatic and fascinating, which might, had it been wrought to completion, have become the finest example of his earlier Florentine time. The Museo of the Spedale degli Innocenti in Florence now holds Domenico Ghirlandajo's fine "Adoration of the Magi", the most brilliant and complete of his easel pictures. Here, assuming a licence which must have appeared quite legitimate to his contemporaries, he depicts in the background, on the one hand, the "Annunciation to the Shepherds", on the other the "Massacre of the Innocents". In one of the exquisite predellas of the "Coronation of the Virgin" in the Vatican Gallery—the flower of Raphael's Peruginesque style—the Urbinate, too, has painted with a most moving naïveté and tenderness the "Wise Men's Offering". North Italy remained in nowise behind Tuscany in its predilection for this great pictorial theme. Were space not lacking, it would be tempting to dwell on its realization by Andrea Mantegna in a famous triptych of his earlier time at the Uffizi; on the solemn hieratic version given by Gentile Bellini in a picture of unique interest, now in the National Gallery, or to analyse our own monumental "Adoration", in the National Gallery, by Vincenzo Foppa, the head of the elder Milanese school. The canvases by Bonifazio dei Pitati in the Accademia of Venice no

longer suggest the solemnity of a great moment in the world's history, but give well the hushed calm, the pleasantness proper to it, while they feast the eye with splendid colour and the loveliness of refreshing landscape. Palma Vecchio must not be forgotten in the enumeration of the Venetians who have treated the subject, the most sumptuous version of which, by an Italian of the later sixteenth century, is, however, the magnificent "Adoration of the Magi", by Paolo Veronese, at Dresden.

North of the Alps we have an inexhaustible mine of pictorial wealth from which to make our choice. The Van Eycks, though they affected chiefly episodes of repose and sacred splendour, such as this one, have not, so far as we know, painted either the one or the other "Adoration". Roger van der Weyden, in the austere majesty of his great triptych in the Munich Gallery, furnishes the Netherlandish type for the subject, creating with authority a formula which, with important variations, we find adopted both by Dierick Bouts and by Memling. If the religious fervour is a little less in Mabuse's world-famous "Adoration of the Magi", formerly at Castle Howard but now in the National Gallery, the material splendour is even greater. To the full as bewildering in their elaboration of gorgeous detail are the many representations of the "Adoration of the Magi", by that curious Flemish-Rhenish Master—so often in the past mistaken for Quentin Matsys on the one hand, for Mabuse on the other—the Master of "The Death of the Virgin". With the second half of the sixteenth century we find some diminution in the popularity of the subject. In the seventeenth we again meet with the "Wise Men's Offering", this time as one of the favourite subjects

of Rubens—with him, however, an excuse for stupendous bravura of execution rather than a reverent conception, such as the earlier Flemings so well knew how to combine with their dazzling displays of brocaded and furred robes, fairly wrought goldsmith's work and glowing jewels.

But to return to the subject of the Nativity proper. The most notable version of the " Adoration of the Shepherds ", in the earlier Netherlandish art, is unquestionably to be found in the great triptych of Hugo van der Goes—the so-called Portinari altar-piece—formerly in the Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova, at Florence, whence it has passed to the Uffizi. Here, though the only human onlookers, besides the sacred personages themselves and the donors, are rude shepherds, their rough-hewn faces transfigured by the inner light of faith, the great Flemish Master has been unable wholly to sacrifice the monumental grandeur proper to the other " Adoration ". Poised aloft, in the air, or kneeling round the Divine Babe in adoration are angels in splendid vesture, wearing round their pale brows fillets of gold and jewels. In the landscape Van der Goes, singular in this as in many other things, has not scrupled to depict the naked trees, the bleak, wind-swept expanses, which we associate with a northern winter.

Passing south again, we find Domenico Ghirlandajo, the cold and self-contained, melting for once into warmth and tenderness in a " Nativity ", now in S. Trinità at Florence.[1] Yet he, too, must retain some of the pomp dear to the painter. His stable is a classic ruin, and in the background, through a triumphal arch dedicated to Pompey the

[1] Formerly in the Accademia.

Great, is seen the glittering cavalcade of the crowned Wise Men winding its way along. Nowhere in Italian art has the Nativity been represented with a more passionate fervour or a more unquestioning naïveté than in the world-famous painting by Botticelli in the National Gallery, to which it is unnecessary again to refer. A little later on we have Bernardino Luini—notably in the beautiful "Nativity" now in the collection of Mr. R. H. Benson, which is one of the finest examples of his art to be found north of the Alps—conceiving the touching subject with that exquisite suavity, that reposeful calm, which are the unvarying characteristics of his art; enriching it with no splendid adjunct, but casting over it, without any departure from a studiously simple treatment, the radiance of beautiful colour in the Milanese mode. Most famous of all renderings of the Nativity is, perhaps, Correggio's great canvas, known as "La Notte", which now hangs, a wreck of its former self, in the great Dresden Gallery. The effort is again in this universally popular work to give the effect of a divine suavity, of a material and spiritual radiance emanating from the infant Christ and enwrapping the bystanders in its gentle flame. But the effort is here too palpable—we feel that the master has risen to the very apex of pictorial achievement, but that spiritually he is already on the downward road. The onlooking angels are poised in the air with miraculous skill; the shepherds, in their rhythmic balance of altitude, are so many difficulties conquered; the Virgin is full of grace and animation: the chiaroscuro surpasses that of Leonardo da Vinci himself. And yet, as an example of sacred art, as a rendering of the great subject attempted, "La

Notte" is a thing to be avoided. That its fascinations proved fatal to the Bolognese school of the Carracci, students know only too well.

An entire change in the mode of conception supervenes when we come to the realists of the seventeenth century. In the National Gallery is a "Nativity", once ascribed to Velazquez, in which, with absolute simplicity, yet with a curious absence of that passionate sympathy which, as a rule, characterizes the Spanish art of the seventeenth century, the painter presents the Birth of Christ with a prosaic realism, just as if it had taken place in the Andalusia of his own day. Some thirty years later, Ribera, then at the climax of his Italo-Spanish style, gives, in the "Nativity" of the Louvre, a representation of the subject hardly less realistic in its adherence to everyday truth, yet, in virtue of a certain rugged grandeur, rising to a far higher intensity and dignity. But it is to Rembrandt—the precursor of all that is noblest and most sincerely emotional in modern art—that we must look, if we would have the "Nativity" realized with uncompromising realism, as a humble scene of the master's own time, and brought back by this very simplicity to its primitive significance. In the pictures at Buckingham Palace and in the National Gallery, in those at Munich and Dresden, the sordid surroundings are not, indeed, forgotten, but rather transfigured by the brotherly love for all humanity—even the lowliest—which is breathed forth. The leap taken in passing over two centuries, from Rembrandt straight to modern times, is not so wide a one as it at first may seem, since he is really at this period of our expiring century nearer to us than are any of his successors who could be named.

Our own Pre-Raphaelites of the Brotherhood—

they to whom, for the absolute sincerity in which they showed themselves naturally akin to their prototypes of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, so much has been, and will still be, forgiven—were better equipped than most of their contemporaries for presenting anew to the world such a subject as this. That the young Millais might have won real success in this field is shown by his now renowned "Carpenter's Shop"—an imagined episode in the childhood of Christ, treated with as much reverence as frank unconventionality. Rossetti did actually approach it in the triptych of Llandaff Cathedral, showing the infant Christ adored by a shepherd and a king—a work executed with a strain of Pre-Raphaelite realism in the portrait-like figures, and also, like most paintings of the fifteenth century, which it recalls, with an admixture of ceremonial pomp. Holman Hunt's "Flight into Egypt" misses true impressiveness by reason of the grotesque exaggeration with which he has represented the murdered Innocents, but even more because, in the figure of the infant Christ, he has striven for a merely human loftiness of intellect inconsistent with the tender years of the Saviour. The true beauty of the picture is in the starlit Eastern night, through which the Holy Family flees from the emissaries of Herod. Sir E. Burne-Jones's "Adoration of the Magi"—that vast tapestry-like composition which has found a final resting-place in the gallery of the Birmingham Corporation—gives us, with a measure of decorative attractiveness of the kind peculiar to this master, an interpretation of a studied quaintness, a forced and too deliberate mysticism, in which the essentials of sacred art are wholly wanting. Bastien-Lepage, when in his

beginnings he competed for the Prix de Rome, produced an "Annonciation aux Bergers" so singularly unlike the frozen conventionalities to which such occasions usually give birth, as at once to surprise and touch all onlookers. It was familiar and touching, as a page of the Bible. The visit of the angel has surprised the shepherds sleeping by their fire in the open air; the oldest of them kneels before the apparition. . . . The youngest gazes with half-closed eyes, his open lips, his hands with fingers apart, expressing astonishment and admiration.

One of the most remarkable representations of the Nativity that recent years have brought forth is that from the brush of Fritz von Uhde, the Saxon painter to whom, as having, with Rembrandt as his prototype, created a new school of sacred art, we have had frequent occasion to refer. Here the actuality of the mode of representation is even more uncompromising than in the renderings of Velazquez, Murillo, Ribera, and Rembrandt. In the central compartment the Virgin, a slender girl of pure Teutonic type, sits in the light of a lantern on her humble couch, adoring, with clasped hands, the infant Saviour, who, a tiny babe, lies carefully wrapped up on her knees; in the background, resting against a rude ladder, Joseph sleeps or meditates. In the one wing are depicted the shepherds approaching on tiptoe; they are hard-featured Bavarian peasants, as rough-hewn as the shepherds of Van der Goes and Ghirlandajo, and, like them, radiant with faith. In the other wing, a choir of child-angels is seen, gathered like so many swallows, under the eaves of the pent-house, as they pour forth their song of thanksgiving. Too nearly

are these last merely merry urchins—Bavarian school-children if the word must out—who of this great moment feel the joyousness rather than the solemnity. Even those who imperfectly sympathize with the German painter's peculiar point of view must be moved by his obvious sincerity, by the wonderful thrill of life with which, by such bold and unconventional yet essentially reverent treatment as this, he renews a motive a thousand times before worked out by the greatest masters of the world. Such a method in religious art, practised without conviction, and merely for its eccentricity, would be—nay, it is—detestable. It is our very admiration for Fritz von Uhde's tenderness and truth that makes us so loth to pardon the distasteful vagaries in which too many of his imitators indulge.

The painter who to-day approaches these great subjects must not hope to succeed by simulating the passion of a Botticelli, the grandeur of a Mantegna, the dramatic passion of a Roger van der Weyden, the fervour of a Memling, the mystic calm of a Perugino, the sweetness of a Luini, the matchless suavity of a Raphael. Still less may he hope to approach, by a mere imitation of externals, the infinitely touching humility of a Rembrandt. He may bow in passionate admiration of what the greatest painters of all time have been able to bring forth in centuries more propitious to art, but he must not imitate, save by working, as the noblest of those artists did, in absolute sincerity, face to face with Nature. Thus, and thus only, can we hope for any genuine renewal of sacred art at a moment so unfavourable to its maintenance and further development. It is well, therefore, that we should show ourselves lenient towards any such merely

superficial eccentricities as mark the conceptions of a Millais, a Holman Hunt, a Rossetti, a Ford Madox Brown, a Bastien-Lepage, a Fritz von Uhde; since it may be that, in casting aside certain noble and time-honoured formulas which no longer appealed to them individually, they have yet succeeded in retaining much of the vital essence of Christian art.

IV

CHILDREN IN ART

Photc. Anderson.

RAPHAEL—"THE SISTINE MADONNA."

Dresden Gallery.

CHILDREN IN ART

"The childhood shows the man,
As morning shows the day."

A CHARMING volume, "Les Portraits de l'enfant", edited by Ch. Moreau Vauthier, furnishes the most appropriate imaginable text for a few remarks on the representation of children in art. We shall be excused for dwelling more on the admirably well-chosen illustrations than on the text itself, though this leads us easily and surely through delightful paths. The rarest felicity, the widest knowledge of periods, schools, and individual artists, have been displayed in the selection of the illustrations, which cover an immense field, as regards both time and space, and give an excellent notion of the best that the art of the world has brought forth in this its fairest flower-garden. We say designedly a notion; for the field is really unlimited. A citation, let alone a reproduction, of all the best that art has to show, of all that the hand of man has amorously portrayed and fashioned, to reflect, ever so faintly, the early springtime of life, the stream of pure delight, the glow of ardent love, that, arising from the contact with childhood and youth adored, impart joy and the vital fire to the aridity, the bitterness of the later years—such an effort would lead us wanderers through endless paths of painful pleasure, and be the beginning of a labour of love that could have no ending. To have undertaken such a task, and to accomplish it even in part, is to have done wonders, and to deserve well

of all lovers of children—that is to say, surely, of the world! It might be surmised that the greater the school and the greater the art, the greater, the more exquisite, would be the achievement even in this field. But no; experience teaches us something like the contrary. It is only before the great climaxes have been reached, or when art has begun to smile, when something of the awful steadfastness, of the unrelaxed strenuousness, which mark the greatest periods at their apogee, has worn away, that are unfolded these fairest pages to gladden both those who bring forth and those who contemplate. In the great Pheidian period of Greek sculpture childhood is wellnigh ignored. The beauty, the steadfastness of youth and manhood is the chief motive in the great Frieze of the Parthenon; but almost the only unbending here from a radiant gravity too solemn for joy is in the figure of the pretty, spoilt boy, who so nonchalantly fastens his master's girdle before he mounts to join the Panathenaic procession. Even in the age of Praxiteles and Scopas, where the divinest suavity, in a measure, took the place of strength and solemnity, where youthful manhood and womanhood, in their perfection, were literally worshipped, the child was still but the little man, preternaturally sedate. This could not be more instructively shown than it is in the " Eirene and Plutus " of Kephisodotos, father of Praxiteles, of which the best copy is in the Glyptothek of Munich, and in the famous " Hermes with the Infant Dionysus " of Praxiteles himself, at Olympia. In the beautiful Attic tomb reliefs of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C., there is mourning, infinitely pathetic in its very reticence, for the young warrior or hunter in the early prime of manhood,

for the gracious and lovely spouse in the meridian of her beauty, for the paterfamilias, noble and steadfast; but little or none for the young child. It is only, roughly speaking, in the Alexandrian phase of Greek art that the sweetness, the naïveté, the roguery of childhood enters as an appreciable element into the life of which art takes count. Then are let loose those myriad flights of little Erotes—Cupid and his crew—to swarm for ever, like locusts over the world, and in every corner of art, making it all their own: smiling, wheedling, pouting, stinging, denying, according, and in every conceivable way delightfully plaguing. Dormant during those Early Christian, Byzantine, and Early Mediæval days, when severe representations of the infant Christ, and, at the most, of stiff, unlovely little angels and *putti* derived from Graeco-Roman art, were the rule, they became obstreperous again when wooing airs from Greece and Rome softened the rigidity of art and melted all the snows. These celestial Loves masqueraded, by the side of the higher, the graver, and nobler celestial appearances, as angels, as cherubim and seraphim, even on occasion giving their type of loveliness, with its pagan allurement, to the infant St. John, nay, to the infant Christ Himself. The rigidity of the noble, the incisively realistic Netherlandish art of the fifteenth century vanished before the invasion of these boy-angels, as mischievous and elusive as the naughtiest of the classic Loves whose place they took; the strenuous passion of realism, the austerity of Albrecht Dürer himself, could not withstand them. They sweetened and beautified throughout the essentially Teutonic art of Lucas Cranach the Elder. Scattering rose leaves, like the angels who drive out

Mephistopheles in the strange scene which brings to a close the second part of Goethe's "Faust", they advanced irresistible, and filled the world.

To treat of the type and characterization of the Divine Infant in painting and sculpture would practically be to discuss the vital essence of all the greatest art. Moreau Vauthier has wisely only skirted round this side of his beautiful subject, and we must perforce here follow his example. Like the Pheidian period of Greek art, and for similar reasons, the great Gothic art of the thirteenth century shows no very intimate or penetrating charm in the presentment of childhood before its closing years, when the tenderness of the relation between the Virgin and Child is exquisitely given—as in the typical and epoch-making statue of the Golden Porch at Amiens. In the fourteenth century we have north of the Alps endless beautiful statues and statuettes in stone, marble, bronze, and ivory, in which the lovely theme is worked out in all its sweetness, and to the uttermost. South of the Alps Giovanni Pisano rose to heights of human and sacred passion unknown before in its treatment. In the palmy days of the *Quattrocento* the great Florentines, Donatello, Desiderio da Settignano, Rossellino, Mino da Fiesole, and above all Luca and Andrea della Robbia, based the best of their art upon the study of childhood and youth in its divine freshness. The famous pulpit of Donatello and Michelozzo at Prato, close to Florence, has as its chief decoration a living festoon of boy-angels, more strenuous and passionate in movement and aspect than their classic prototypes, but hardly less irrepressible in roguishness. The angels and boys of Desiderio, Rossellino, and Mino have an added

suavity, a radiant joyousness that shows them still hovering nearer to the Divine than the being arrived at manhood can approach, from whom these things inexpressible have too much faded. Luca della Robbia has represented the infant Saviour as hardly any Italian artist has done, save Giovanni Bellini, among the painters. It is still the baby Christ, nestling to His mother's bosom, not to be thought of apart from her all-enveloping love; and yet with something of Divine watchfulness, loftiness, and strength, which transfigures, but does not destroy, the ineffable charm of childhood's first unfolding. It is so difficult to draw the line here between the too much and the too little. Giovanni Bellini has done so in a different fashion, yet with a similar result. The Divine Infant with him is still the Babe irresistibly appealing in the very defencelessness of infancy, perfect in childlike loveliness, and, withal, indefinably the Divinity, to whom to appeal, upon whom to lean. With Mantegna the Babe is sometimes grave, majestic, sometimes suffering, oppressed, afflicted already with the woes of humanity; there is both in the Virgin and the Child Christ a poignant suggestion of the world-tragedy to come. Much earlier in the century the Van Eycks had represented the infant Christ all too realistically as a being preternaturally grave, wrinkled, careworn as an aged sage. Even Memling—suave, gentle Memling—who infused into Netherlandish austerity something of the sweetness and limpidity of that German art of the Lower Rhine in which his own had its origin, never quite emancipated himself from this stiff, severe mode of presentment; never gave quite so charming a picture of Divine infancy as, for instance, Stephan Lochner did in the famous

Dombild of Cologne Cathedral. Raphael, who in his earlier Madonnas—especially in the " Madonna del Gran Duca " (Pitti) and the " Madonna del Cardellino " (Uffizi) — had solved the insoluble problem so as for ever to establish a standard in art, o'erleapt himself in two still more famous works, the popular " Madonna della Seggiola " (Pitti) and the Raphael of Raphaels—for such the world, at any rate, holds it to be—the " Madonna di San Sisto " (Plate IV.) of Dresden. In the latter, especially, he has given to the infant Christ, as He sits erect in His mother's arms, dependent no longer on the love that enfolds Him, the lofty, care-weighted brow, the awful, all-divining eyes, of some Hebrew prophet, or some sibyl, to whose gaze life and eternity are, for an instant, laid bare. A sublime conception, if you will, but one which prematurely destroys all the beauty and the sweetness of the relation between Mother and Child!

Those who know the Venetian school of the earlier Renaissance must endeavour to recall for themselves what the Vivarini, Crivelli, Carpaccio, Bartolommeo Montagna, Cima, and the rest did in this favourite branch of their art. When the splendour of the Venetian Renaissance developed itself, when first Giorgione, Titian, Lotto, and Palma, and, later, Titian (in new developments), Tintoretto, and Paolo Veronese had the field, the care of art was more for the sumptuous beauty of the Madonna and the saintly loveliness, or, as it might be, the austere majesty, of the goodly company of saints who surrounded her, than for the solution of that difficult but grateful task to which their predecessors had more enthusiastically devoted themselves — the inspired characterization of the

infant Christ Himself. With Correggio the aim was ever to embody the ideal of childish grace and sweetness, of radiant charm and vivacity; with no thought but of some flower of infant loveliness that must be delicately nurtured and sheltered from the storm-wind. In the next century the overwhelming exuberance of Rubens expands itself most lovingly in the presentment of myriads of chubbiest, ruddiest, most over-fed angels, who riotously encircle, and romp round, the Virgin and Child. The Christ is almost invariably one of the master's own babes, and it is radiant with health, illuminated, as it were, with love received, but not with the higher love given forth: a Christ all too earthly, too little lifted from the common level of humanity. And with Van Dyck—at any rate when he portrays the Divine Infant—it is much the same, save that the exuberance is less, and the concentration of love, vivifying the object, less too. Rembrandt, who could conceive under the rough, coarse human envelope the most truly moving Christ in manhood that art has known, could, indeed, never realize the infant Christ save as the babe, passive and somnolent, of humble parents, sometimes rosy and well-nourished—as in the large " Holy Family " of the Alte Pinakothek at Munich—but more usually small, mean, and ailing: a being to pity, but never to adore. Murillo has peopled the world of art with a greater number of boy-angels, of *putti*, of Divine babes than Rubens himself. These large-eyed children of the South, delicate or robust, as they belong to the well-to-do citizen or to the man of the people, make great flower-garlands of human loveliness for the Madonna as, with the moon-sickle under her feet, she sails triumphant through

the heavens. He renders their infantile sweetness with a love almost maternal in its passion, and without them his art would be short of its chief significance. Yet the Divine Child—even in such a work as the famous " Miracle of St. Anthony of Padua " at Seville—is but one of them; not a radiant central star in the Milky Way, but merely the fairest flower among many.

It is time, however, to say a word as to the actual portraiture of children, that is, of individuals, through the ages. This can hardly be said to have existed, save exceptionally, before the latter half of the fifteenth century. As one instance, among many, of what the Florentines did in this direction may be cited Domenico Ghirlandajo's singularly moving " Portrait of a Florentine with his Son ",[1] in the Louvre. This is unique in the art of the time—and, indeed, in art generally. The father, a man of stately aspect, but afflicted with some terribly disfiguring affection of the nose, bends forward with a veritable passion of paternal love to take in his arms his fair-haired little boy; and the child, nothing dismayed by what appals us, responds with an affection so beautiful in its spontaneity that father and son are in this moment but one in love—one heart and one soul. In the sixteenth century it was, curiously enough, Bronzino, so uncompromising in his hard, sculptural rendering of patrician haughtiness in man and woman, who best among the Florentines caught the individuality of children, and with it their pretty, naïve ways, under inspection. Titian, who in the " Three Ages " (Plate IX.) at Bridgewater House and in the " Sacred and Profane Love " (" Medea and Venus ") of the

[1] Now entitled " Francesco Sassetti and his Grandson ".

Borghese Gallery, had imagined the loveliest and most spiritual of Loves, who in the "Bacchanal" and the "Worship of Venus" of Madrid, and above all in the "Bacchus and Ariadne" of the National Gallery, had reached the zenith in the representation of exuberant childhood revelling in untrammelled freedom and delight — Titian nevertheless shows himself relatively harsh and prosaic in a famous and technically superb portrait, "A Daughter of the House of Strozzi", now in the Berlin Gallery.

It is in the seventeenth century that the art of portraying childhood and youth reaches a climax, not less in the North than in the South. A word has been said already as to Rubens, and we need only adduce as examples of his supremacy in such subjects the "Albert and Nicholas, sons of Rubens and Isabella Brant", in the Liechtenstein Gallery at Vienna, the "Francis, son of Rubens and Helena Fourment", at Longford Castle, and the lovely naked child on the knee of his mother in the Alte Pinakothek of Munich. But Van Dyck paints children with a higher refinement, with a more pensive grace, with a subtler feeling for their fragile loveliness, like that of some flower just peeping forth from the bud. All through his career he triumphs in this field. See the beautiful Genoese children, who with so grave a charm stand beside their slender, youthful mothers, or are grouped alone, as in "The Balbi Children", formerly at Panshanger,[1] or the "Putto Bianco", in the Durazzo Palace, at Genoa; see the series of canvases representing the children of Charles I., of which the first, and by far the finest, is at Turin;

[1] Now in the possession of Lady Lucas, and on loan to the National Gallery.

see, most pathetic of all, the " Duke of Buckingham and Lord Francis Villiers "—the future scapegrace and the future hero—at Windsor Castle. Not the least engaging painter of children among the Flemings is the contemporary of Rubens and Van Dyck, Cornelis de Vos. And it is easy to see why, when one looks at his portrait, surrounded by his own offspring, in the Museum of Brussels, or at his two little girls, in the Berlin Gallery, in their best dresses of stiffest and most sumptuous brocade, yet with their sweetness and animation subdued, not wholly effaced by the necessity for " company manners ". Most delightful of all is, perhaps, the " Portrait of a Child fastened into a Chair ", at the Staedel Institut, by Rubens. Has the awakening to life of the bright, vigorous little animal ever been more irresistibly presented than here ? The children of the great Dutch masters, notably those of Frans Hals, are in their very vivaciousness coarse and uninviting, unsuggestive of cleanliness or gentle nurture, of anything but boisterous, aggressive iollity, requiring suppression by drastic means. Rembrandt paints his own son Titus in every stage of childhood, youth, and boyhood with a pathos wholly tragic in its premonition of calamity; but he is rarely successful with the children of others —not even completely in the beautiful " Family Portrait " of Brunswick. Apart from the grotesque naïveté of the conception, the celebrated or notorious " Ganymede, with the Eagle ", of Dresden, is a singular instance of brutal, uninspired realism, in one whom inspiration often lifted so high above his fellows that we may not even discuss him with them, but must look on with bated breath, and be silent. Some of the less illustrious Dutchmen

were much more successful in their efforts in this direction. A more delightful portrait of a boy it would be difficult to point to than the "Boy with a Muff", by Jacob van Oost, in our own National Gallery; though the airs and graces of this curled and petted darling rather suggest that the rod *has* been spared and the child spoilt. Velazquez, usually so haughtily self-contained in his portraiture of the adult, is, whether consciously or unconsciously, intensely pathetic in his rendering of the offspring of Philip IV. Condemned almost from their birth to the inflexible etiquette of the Spanish Court, growing up pale and bloodless, like flowers blanched by lack of sun, in the musty atmosphere of joyless palaces from which all human pulsation seems to have been banished, these children, weighed down by the rigid splendours of the costumes that imprison them, droop and decline almost as soon as their pretty, timid eyes are opened to the sun. Look at the pitiful little weakling "Don Prosper" at Vienna; or the diaphanous "Infante Marguerite" of the Louvre; or the same blonde Infanta in her wonderful costume of rose and silver at the Prado; or at little "Don Baltásar Carlos" at Hertford House, in the still, silver-embroidered robe, from which his pale head emerges, lily-like in delicacy and transparency. In the Louis-Quatorzian age, and, indeed, as regards portraiture, in the first half of the eighteenth century, children appear as little men and women, only less splendid and less grave than their elders; and if to be loved, yet certainly not to be imprudently hugged, lest their sumptuous *atours* should be disarranged. At this period it was not, perhaps, quite so early in the life of the child that the whole

heart of the parent went out to it. It is the splendid youth who starts for the army, or the daughter soon to be whirled away by a *mariage de raison* into the conventional life of the time, to whom the passionate devotion of these Louis-Quatorzian parents is as a rule given.

In the eighteenth century the reign, the triumph of the child begins again, and it is maintained throughout, not less on the one side of the Channel than on the other. The Alexandrian Erotes, naughty busybodies, second-rate Cupids, whose relation to the Love God is much that which Mephistopheles holds to the chief Devil, Satan himself, swarm again in the air. Poetized by Watteau in "L'Embarquement pour Cythère", they are depoetized, vulgarized by Boucher in a hundred gay furniture pictures. Fragonard gives the naughtiness of Dan Cupid every possible licence in "La Chemise enlevée"; accords to him a higher and more serious rôle in "La Fontaine d'Amour"; but in "La Maîtresse d'école" comes down to earth without loss of charm, and revels in the homely charm of the Cupid of the cottage and schoolroom. Chardin eschews mythology, and the divinities of mid-air, in order to present as hardly any other has done the reluctant boy started by a careful mother for school, the demure little maid obediently saying her "Bénédicité" before the humble meal. Greuze, when he depicts the *petite fille*, who is not yet the *jeune fille*, is at his very best, since there the "*anguis in herba*" does not dart out, tainting all that is fairest and most ingenious in youth with its subtle poison. As examples we may take the lovely "Jeune Comtesse Mollien" in Moreau Vauthier's book, or the still more exquisite "Child with a Branch of

Orange-Blossom " in the collection of the late Mr. Leopold de Rothschild.

But it is time to turn to England. We shall not follow in the footsteps of Sir Walter Armstrong, and repeat his amusing paradox that Gainsborough understood children, and painted children, better than Sir Joshua. All the famous things of the latter are here to prove the contrary. True, these sweet tyrants of the nursery and the playing-field are a little conscious that they are being looked at, quite aware of their supremacy over their elders. But the child is in this respect like the dog. All its beauty and charm, all the love and sweetness that is in it are drawn out, as the sun draws the dew, by the ardent love of the parent. " Lady Caroline Montagu Scott ", " Miss Frances Crewe ", " Master Bunbury ", " The Strawberry Girl ", " Collina ", " Simplicity ", " Master Philip Yorke ", and a score of other works of the same order will, so long as they endure, stand for the highest and the most exquisite that art has accomplished in this direction. Gainsborough's wondrously painted girls and striplings are, in comparison, dry-hearted yet febrile little beings, not clinging for love and support, but self-sufficing, and in all their loveliness scentless flowers. His youths—his " Pink Boy " (once at Waddesdon) and his " Blue Boy " (once at Grosvenor House), for instance—are not only beautiful, but eminently lovable; it is with the child that he is less than successful. The subtle relation of mother and child, the indefinable oneness of the two, has rarely been more beautifully given than in Romney's " Mrs. Cawardine and her Daughter ". He is, moreover, the painter above all others—save Reynolds himself—of the true

British boy, of the stripling gifted often with more than the beauty of woman, yet man-hearted already in courage, resolution, and hope. Raeburn, too, has done superbly well as the painter of boys. Lawrence's smart, well-washed darlings of the nursery are self-conscious to excess, but not self-conscious with the naughty, elf-like charm of Sir Joshua. The male beauty, "Master Lambton", is so ultra-sentimental, so aggravating in pose and costume, that one longs to treat him as, in the pictures and statuettes of the eighteenth century, Master Cupid is so often treated by Dame Venus, who herself—especially in her degenerate phase—so richly deserves a more serious castigation of the same order. Millais is the typical English painter of children of the nineteenth century, and he has, with less pathos and with less distinction, followed in the footsteps of the great men who have just now been cited. The children of Mr. J. S. Sargent stand midway in conception between the modern English and the modern French ideals, but incline to self-possession, and to the interrogative rather than the clinging, confiding mood. It is in the modern art of France that the passionate love, the heart-hunger of the parent for the offspring, has found the fullest expression. Carolus-Duran, the composed and indifferent painter of man and woman, becomes the true poet as well as the master when his emotion is aroused by such subjects as these. Loveliest of all his works of this order is the "Beppino", inspired, no doubt, by Velazquez, but more potently still by love. The tragic side of the subject illustrated by Eugène Carrière—with formidable power to wound, but also with an unsurpassed tenderness to console—in the "Maternité"

of the Luxembourg; and the comic side by the delicious "Deux Amis"—the dearest and most pathetically ugly of little boys caressing in all love and confidence the biggest and handsomest of Newfoundland dogs. There is a veritable frenzy of love in the design of M. Prouvé, with which Moreau Vauthier's volume is brought to a close—a mother of the people holding up her infant to be kissed by the father, who seems almost, in his adoration, to drink its breath and life away.

Thus all ages, all schools, all artists, in their measure have adored and glorified the child: the child, symbol for ever of terrestrial passion and its infinite torment, but also of Divine Love and its infinite consolation. When the divinities of ancient Greece had somewhat lost their power, and their serene, compelling majesty no longer held the worshipper in awe and in submission to the will of Zeus, then the lower Eros, unimpeded, had his way, and with his swarm, his hordes of pigmy warriors invaded and held the world. And with the delicious poison of his breath, with the sting of his heart-piercing dart, he holds it still. But then arose, and was revealed in all its beauty, Divine Love, the healer, to whom the wounded, not of the lower love alone, but all the lame and halt of life, prostrated, and prostrate themselves, in supplication and in solace. This Babe has eyes of solemn majesty, more tremendous than the gaze of shattered Zeus himself; but these are the eyes of Love, whose rays of purest light pierce but to heal and to give life again. The child in its moment of beauty that is still of heaven and yet near earth has the Divine and the human beauty mingled. Hence, perhaps, the love it draws so irresistibly partakes of both.

Into it enters rapture, overwhelming passion, hope, and fear alternate—and these it is that mark the Earthly Love. Into it enter, consolation, sacrifice of self, protection to appealing weakness, mercy, like that Divine—and these it is that mark the Heavenly Love.

V

SPRING IN ART

Photo. Anderson.

BOTTICELLI—"THE PRIMAVERA."

The Uffizi, Florence.

SPRING IN ART

" Ce soir tout va fleurir ; l'immortelle nature
Se remplit de parfum, d'amour et de murmure."

THE ages of romance have also been those in which Spring, with its renewal of all things, with its train of youth and beauty and love, has played the greatest part in art. To worship of celestial as of terrestrial things the unsullied freshness of this moment of earth's virginity renewed has ever seemed the most fitting framework. Of the celestial as of the earthly paradise Spring perpetual, Spring unscorched by the burning shafts of the sun, unstained by the heat and the darkness of earthly passion, has appeared to poets or painters and above all to those who are both, the fairest and most appropriate garment, the most expressive symbol. Not the sun and showers alone of the sublime poet's song have made for the blessed a lasting spring, but the radiant smile of Divine love. One feels rather than sees the vernal atmosphere in the Paradise of the fourteenth-century Dominican painter who adorned the walls of the Spanish chapel in the cloister of S. Maria Novella; one feels it purer, more crystalline still in the hymns to the Deity that are the truly inspired paintings of Fra Angelico. Not only the Annunciation, which with its promise of hope and mercy to mankind belongs naturally to the spring, but the " Nativity ", to which some northern painters—among them the Master of Flémalle and Hugo van der Goes—have given a background of Northern winter, is by the painters

of the sweet South expressed with all the buoyancy and delight of the year in its youth. And the more ornate and ceremonial "Adoration of the Magi", as is but natural, is even more richly and luxuriously enframed in beauty. In Gentile da Fabriano's great "Adoration" (Plate III.)[1] (Accademia, Florence), not only does the splendid procession wind along through flowering trees and shrubs, but the whole framework of the picture is set with minute panels, upon which are painted the flowers of the field in their humble, delicate beauty, and with such reverence that they seem to breathe forth thanksgiving in the two panels by Fra Filippo Lippi, with the Madonna in Adoration before the Divine Child[2] (Accademia, Florence), and in the still more beautiful rendering of the same subject by the same painter which is one of the glories of the Kaiser-Friedrich Museum at Berlin, a veritable carpet of pure, newly-opened flowers has sprung up at the feet of the Divine personages. As a background, moreover, to many a Florentine "Madonna", among those which it was once the fashion to attribute to Baldovinetti, but to which we now for want of a better attach a much humbler name—that of Pier Francesco Fiorentino—we find the most delicious tangle, almost a hedge of spring and summer blossoms. Do the flowers which show themselves in solitary beauty between stones in Leonardo da Vinci's "Vierge aux Rochers" make—we ask ourselves—for this symbolic representation of Divine love and salvation to mankind a setting of spring and light renewed, penetrating mysterious gloom? The question is a little difficult to answer, seeing that in the original version, done

[1] Lately removed to the Uffizi.
[2] Now removed to the Uffizi.

by Leonardo himself in his earlier and more Florentine manner (Louvre), the flower at the feet of St. John is the tall and stately iris, while in the repetition in the National Gallery, done by Ambrosio de Predis, under the supervision of the master, the more vernal narcissus appears in its stead. But, leaving Italy for a moment, let us retrace our steps more than a hundred years, and turn to the wonderful little diptych, " King Richard II. worshipping at the Feet of the Virgin and Child " (Wilton House) (Plate XVI.)—that most precious jewel of primitive English art. See how it is not only a devotional and ceremonial altar-piece in miniature, but truly a poem of spring. On the one side the flower-like beauty, the tenderness, the fragility of the boy-King who kneels so timidly, yet so confidingly, in prayer under the guardianship of his patron saints; on the other the Virgin and Child, bathed in a joy ineffable, that no foreboding has darkened as yet, and with them a whole company of angels, golden-haired, robed in purest azure, crowned with clear, pale roses, fresh and joyous in eternal youth. Above, the great screen of angels' wings that point heavenwards, rustling, vibrating, against the gold of the background that is the sky; below, the green sward studded with the flowers of spring—the violet, the daisy, the rose. I need not so soon again describe the lovely little " Hortus Conclusus " or " Earthly Paradise " (Staedel Museum, Frankfort), which like the later " Marriage of St. Catherine ", by Memling, in the Louvre, is a poem of spring undimmed, of earthly and celestial felicity alike.

The poets of all nations and all times, in this following Nature herself, have made the dawn of Spring the coursing anew of the life-blood through

the veins of the Earth and all created things, symbolical of the dawn of Love. To Nature this ever-recurrent renewal, this throbbing life that bursts forth through the winding-sheet of winter, this hymn of worship and thanksgiving, that, repeated and again repeated through all time, rises through the heavens. To Man, but this one short hour for the vernal freshness of the soul, that the worship of beauty and the worship of love may maintain in a brightness that even age and sorrow may not dim. The great ages of romance, especially in France, were the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. A halo of lyrical beauty, a glamour of eternal spring and eternal youth enwrapped and transfigured the terrestrial passion in the poems and romances of those ages, thus tempering the rudeness of the times. Of an adequate pictorial expression of poetry and passion during those centuries there could, all the same, be no question, seeing that art had not then acquired the technical development, the subtlety, or the variety which alone could render such expression possible. So that we are obliged to fall back upon the fifteenth century, during which an ardent realism, a love of man and the world as they are, was not so much combating romance as giving to it a more definite and less lyrical form. Showers of flowers, the blooms of spring and summer in well-ordered profusion, covered the borders of illuminated missals, adding to their contents a beauty, a holiness that even the beauty of words could not surpass. Far-stretching prospects of landscape shone clear, showing Nature in her full robe of shimmering green, under the steady tempered radiance of the sky. Even in these missals the terrestrial love was not forgotten. Take, as an example, the finest of all

these, the *Très Riches Heures* illuminated for Jean, Duc de Berry, by Pol de Limbourg and his brothers at the beginning of the fifteenth century (Chantilly). The pages of the calendar successively illustrating April and May are the most perfect imaginable poems of spring. In the former Duc Jean himself and a young courtier discourse leisurely of the tender passion with noble and sumptuously habited ladies, while damsels of less high degree, bending down, pluck flowers new sprung from the sward. But in May love is openly triumphant. Through the flowering hedges, on the skirts of the forest, advances the gayest, the most splendid cavalcade of amorous knights and gracious ladies, all of them, both lovers and beloved, chapleted with fresh leaves and decked in their gayest apparel. The year is still in its spring, love is still in the stage of sport and dalliance, not yet in that of the ardour that wounds. At the head of the procession are the trumpeters, garlanded like the rest and pouring forth ear-shattering music. We might dream that they are proclaiming to the world the words of that late Latin poem, the *Pervigilium Veneris*: "*Cras amet qui nunquam amavit; quique amavit cras amet*"—"Let those to-morrow love who ne'er knew love till now; and those who loved before let them love once again". How wide a gulf divides this naïve and charming realization of budding passion, according to the canons of Northern romance, from the exquisite subtlety, the classical humanism of Botticelli's famous "Primavera" (Plate V.), painted some sixty years later for the Medici? Here the ravishing beauty of Spring's awakening comes to us through the conception, first, of the poet-humanist, and, secondly, of the poet-painter. It is no outburst of spontaneous joy, earth crying

out to heaven and heaven to earth, that the picture stands for, but a cerebral and purely Florentine delight in the analysing of poetic conceits, in the analysing of vernal beauty—or beauties. We do not take our joy in one great grasp, but absorb it little by little. This is the realm of Venus, demon-enchantress no longer—as she was throughout the Middle Ages—but goddess once more, and restored to her throne. From the icy embrace, the icy blasts of winter, the earth-nymph, all trembling still, escapes to shelter with the flower-goddess, the embodiment of Spring's glory, of her achieved but still undiminished loveliness. Blind Cupid, no dangerous adolescent yet, but still a winged boy, shoots his arrow from above at the Graces, that divine and most Botticellian group of fair forms entwined, which symbolises the elegance, the graciousness, the charm of love that consciously joys in itself, eluding (after a fashion peculiar to the Renaissance at this period) the fierce and more tormenting passion that burns and disfigures.

When we come to the dawn of the full Renaissance—Giorgione, Titian, Palma Vecchio, and their fellows—love strips itself of romance and symbolism to become all human, and perhaps more beautiful still, in its utter surrender of soul and body to passion not all earthy, though frankly of earth. But for this love, for this passionate and splendid art, spring is no longer the fitting frame, the fitting vehicle of expression. Palma Vecchio still gives on occasion the freshness of the year born again—with its foliage still green, with its carpet of star-like flowers—but Giorgione and Titian are for summer in its luxuriance or autumn in its splendour. Fullest summer enframes that wonderful poem of sensuous

love made one with music and nature that is the "Concert Champêtre" (Plate VII.) of Giorgione (Louvre). Late summer or autumn it is that we divine in the storm-illumined background of the "Landscape with the Soldier and the Gipsy" (perhaps "Adrastus and Hypsipyle"), of the Giovanelli Palace at Venice. A poem of summer, too, is Titian's most moving and beautiful "Three Ages" (Plate IX.) at Bridgewater House, with the backs of the languorous shepherd and shepherdess pausing from love's ecstasy to listen, during a moment of repose more blissful still, to the music of rustic pipes, still vibrating in the love-laden air. The romance of Dosso Dossi is literary and dramatic, and thus fittingly calls to its aid, not the clearness and even beauty of spring, but the agitation, the tempestuous splendour of autumn. Tintoretto loves the swollen streams, the gnarled branches, the sun-gilt yellowing foliage of the advancing season and finds in them the most appropriate comment to his tremendous fantasies. In the seventeenth century we come upon Salvator Rosa, a romanticist of the militant and ultra-dramatic type, whose lurid scenes of a splendid conventionality which is nevertheless securely based upon Nature are again poems of autumn, not in its consoling richness but in its terrifying violence.

A return to the romanticism in poetry and art that reigns supreme during the earlier ages was made in the nineteenth century; and with this we find again an overwhelming predilection in painting for the fresher beauties of Spring, and all that it brings with it of clear, pure, lyrical charm of the milder order. So great has been the use, nay, the abuse, of this favourite motive, in the later years of

the past century and, indeed, in still more recent times, that the spring landscape has become a commonplace, a formula, so over-familiar that it loses something, though never quite all, of its glamour, of its power to evoke in the human breast the thrill of hope and in its train the passion of regret. And yet let us strive with all intensity of effort to retain and cherish as one of the most precious of gifts this painful rapture, this "divine despair" at the renewal of life and beauty in the world, with which only our spirit and not our body may keep pace. Let us strive to separate the precious ore from the dross and to bear in mind how much of inestimable treasure the great masters of modern times have left to us, what exquisite variants they have executed on this heart-searching theme, of which the world will never tire. To enumerate a hundredth part of what has been done in this direction would require not a paragraph but a volume. The life-work of Corot is a poem of solemn and unstained joy sung to earth and heaven in honour of spring. But Daubigny, if he is content to soar a little less high above the realities of things, is more poignant still and nearer to our hearts. Take the great landscape "Le Printemps", in the Louvre, which, with a pathos so penetrating, renders joy at the everyday beauty of the world in its spring vesture. It is merely a corner of farmland, bright with the silver-green of new foliage and the beauty of blossoming fruit trees. But the atmosphere of aspiring youth and hope, of love and peace, that enfolds and fills it all? We almost resent as an intrusion the presence of the young lovers, though they are ever so discreetly half-hidden in the verdure. Take again, as an example

of a purely English painted poem, that strangely moving production in Millais's earlier time, " Apple Blossoms "—a work the little awkwardnesses and angularities of which but add to the poignancy of pathos that goes out from it to pierce our hearts. The main motive is of the simplest. A company of young girls in the early springtime of life sit or lie dreaming under the blooming apple trees of a thick-planted orchard—the scythe of the mower peeping forth ominously at the side. So close-knit is this freshness of dreaming, yearning youth to this freshness of blossoming, expanding Spring, that the joy in it all becomes an excess, an ache, a deep-seated pain, almost a foreboding. Here, again, it is " *cras amet, qui nunquam amavit* "; but somehow the gaiety, the insouciance of that gay company of revellers in love who rode out so bravely on May Day is gone—for ever vanished. True, the nascent love is here, too, with joy in its train; but also thus early, when the flower is but in the bud, with a mysterious foreboding.

As a final illustration of the modern view I will take the " Frühlingsreigen " (" Spring's Delights ") of Arnold Böcklin, which adorns the Dresden Gallery. If not a flawless work of art, this is the outcome of a great sentiment, of a great vision of life, and it gathers round it thoughts which may be the on-looker's and not the master's, but are none the less inspired by his work. Midway between the flower-enamelled hill and the pearl grey clouds which, mildly luminous, sail across the sky circles in the air a living garland of Loves, pale still in their newly unveiled beauty—their brows crowned with roses, crimson and faintly flushing white. Are they of heaven, are they of earth? We hardly know, so

near is their delicate pallor to the warm-grey of the clouds, so near is the warmth, the passion of their movement to the pulsation of the awakened earth! Are they not rather of both, though a little removed from either, in their purity that is passion, in their passion that is purity? It is the awakening of life and love, the vernal sigh that lifts Nature's bosom once again. At the crystal-clear spring are nymph and faun, the forces of Nature in eternal youth and vigour; but of mankind in this paradise of earth, no trace! The seer of spring visions has felt that the love of the individual man for the individual woman, whatever its intensity, is too small a thing to be included in a scheme so all-embracing. It is the very principle of Life and of Love that it is here sought to evoke. Weep not overmuch if for this delicate rose-flushed pallor of the year in its youth, too soon the hectic splendour and then the dreary decline of autumn is exchanged; if upon the pellucid clearness of the spring with its sparkling stream, its fair-woven carpet of many-hued flowers so soon, with an interval that is as nothing, follow the roar of the torrent, turbid and foaming, the whirl of the dead leaves in the chilling blast—and then silence! Weep not overmuch if for the man and for the woman, even though the spiritual flame burn bright and steady, no new spring can follow upon this autumn and this winter. See here, in the poet-painter's fair inspiring vision, the miracle of Earth once more renewed; the miracle, too, of Love, the heavenly and the earthly, one and indivisible—merged as the body in the soul—and both—the earthly as the heavenly—in their essence immortal.

VI

JOY IN ART

Photo. Hanfstaengl.

BOTTICELLI—"THE NATIVITY."

The National Gallery.

JOY IN ART

Music of all the arts is the one through which Joy may be most fittingly expressed. Joy serene and calm, Joy ecstatic that knows a morrow of bitterness and disenchantment, Joy noble and enduring, that marches triumphant over conquered obstacles, Joy celestial that rises from Purgatory to Paradise, and sees fade into nothingness at its feet the stains of earth and the pangs of hell. The greatest masters are those who have led our steps over "burning marle", through groves peopled by awful shapes of despair, to joy at last —the joy that lifts us above earth, yet not too far from the pulsating heart of humanity, not into the icy splendours of an awful isolation. After the tragic woe, nobly borne, of Gluck's "Orpheus", comes the "Scene of Elysian Fields", with its exquisite serenity soothing the storm-weary heart; and in Mozart's "Zauberflöte", what lofty and consoling peace, what steady life-giving radiance, dominating and extinguishing evil without even the smirch of frown and anger? The rugged figure of Beethoven has been made to stand before the world, titanic in bewilderment and anguish. And yet what music that mortal has sung has breathed forth a joy more solemn, more truly mingling the felicity of earth with that of heaven, than the last act—the act of thanksgiving—of "Fidelio"? Is this not a higher and truer note, even than the shout of Joy, torn from the breast of millions, with which the Choral Symphony ends? Schubert has touched

every spring of the human heart, has wailed with the despairing, has plunged into the depths of Tartarus, or, with Prometheus, defied the lightnings of Zeus. But he has also unlocked Nature's springs, and poured the delicious coolness of her waters as a balm into the gaping wounds of Man. In the "Doppelgänger" he has, with Heine, expressed a dreariness of despair beyond tears, and beyond hope; in the "Young Nun" he has made visible that starlit serenity of renouncement, more awful in its calm than Despair itself. But in "Death and the Maiden" has he not evoked, answering in solemn sweetness to the anguished appeal for mercy of the young life, consoling Death, brother to the genius imagined by Walter Savage Landor, in whose neck the weary wanderer buries his head and is at peace; brother to the comforting angel, imagined by Watts—to him who folds soft grey wings round the child, and hushes him tenderly to eternal sleep? In Brahms Sorrow, Regret, Steadfastness, Joy are all treated as intellectualized and spiritualized emotion, from which the sensuous element has been strained away. The weight of earth nobly borne deserves and wins the Joy, grave and lofty even in its fulness, that is achieved in the end. As in the Finale of the Symphony No. 1, when the floodgates are at last opened, and irresistible in massive strength, but still equable and controlled, are poured forth the waters of gladness and rejoicing. Wagner lifts us to Walhall, or to regions of still loftier and serener peace. With a touch of his enchanted wand he transports us to the bowels of the earth, and the green depths of the waters; or weaves around us sweet, baleful spells of enchantment. He shows us the blackest depths of tragic horror and dull-eyed

Despair. And yet Love—and that is, according to him, the fire at the heart of the world, the life-giving essence—remains behind, and raises the voice of Hope and Joy above all the horrid din. Is this not the triumphant climax of the "Flying Dutchman"? Is it not the end, so solemn in beauty, of the soul's tragedy that is in "Tannhäuser"? Even "Tristan and Isolde", the poem of Love overwhelmed and annihilated by its own onrushing might, ends not in gloom but in an ecstasy that abolished death and dissolves the soul in bright light-waves into the Unnameable and the Unknowable. And in the "Twilight of the Gods", when blackness and horror cover the earth and Hell prevails, and the hero goes down with the coward and Walhall seems to shrivel up like a parchment, and rising waters make a new deluge, the prevailing voice of Love, sole spark of life, sole guide, sole Joy in the ruin of all things, soars into Time and Space, giving promise of a new creation from the ashes still glowing and throbbing with its life-giving power. But in "Parsifal" the Joy is higher still, and it is lifted into regions where the dull agonies of regret and remorse, where the earth-stain can dim it no more. When into the mysterious dome of the temple, wherein is enshrined the Holy Grail, rise, wave after wave, in linked sweetness of worship and thanksgiving, the voices, many and yet indissolubly one, of the Knights, the choristers, and the white-robed children who are betwixt heaven and earth; when supporting them the melodies of Faith, Hope, and the Charity that is Love, soar, adorned anew and transfigured by the meshes of diamond light that the celestial harps weave round them—then the climax of Joy, the highest that human ear can drink and

human heart can bear, has been achieved. How wholly different is the note in that last sad outpouring of Tchaikowsky's heart, the "Symphonie Pathétique", which has subjugated English music-lovers in a fashion so astonishing that for the enduring power of its spells mere musical beauty is insufficient to account. Here the great waves of the passion that rises and falls, the delights of sweet, strange rhythm, the pomp of pageant and martial array—all these things pass across the eyes and strive for empire over the soul. Its melodious agonies surge mightier and mightier, until, in one last sigh of "divine despair", they sink into the great abyss of nothingness. Here the Angel of Darkness, fair and undistorted still, even in the deepest shadow of his veiled agony, has conquered; Joy has been blotted out. In César Franck's great oratorio, "Les Béatitudes"—too little known in England—the beatitude, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted", as the great French master treats it contains the very essence of human woe, but also of human joy spiritualized. The voice of the widow rises to heaven lamenting for the lost spouse, and the voice of the orphan crying out for the parent, and the voice of the lover crying out for the beloved. And all the voices by degrees weave themselves into a heart-piercing utterance that is not loud-voiced rebellion but only despairing acceptance—these human agonies combining, with an art so subtle as to simulate nature, into a marvellous climax of last melodious appeal. And as this sinks is heard in hushed quietude and simplicity the voice of Christ giving forth, almost in a monotone, the words, "Bénis sont ceux qui pleurent, car ils seront consolés". Softly floating accompani-

ment of strings supports and follows—so undefined in its waves of loveliness that it merges at last imperceptibly into the vibrations of the air and there is silence. Here, then, is no loud pæan of rejoicing, no hymn of gratitude rends the skies, but a Joy beyond human expression, that music only, and no words, however penetrating, however lofty in inspiration, can paint. With Richard Strauss, especially with his great symphonic poems, "Death and Transfiguration", "Thus spake Zarathustra", and "The Life of a Hero", it is otherwise. In the first-named masterpiece of musical expression the agony of the fluttering human soul, the moments of pause and respite, the survey, as if already from afar, of the whole life that is fast ebbing, the last terrible struggle that precedes dissolution—these things are musically told with a poignancy that compels the listener to sympathy and to awe. But then, in a glorious climax that has in its beauty nothing of earthly voluptuousness, veil after veil is lifted, the earth mist of tears and woe more and more dissolves, more and more under the celestial radiance becomes rainbow-hued, until at last the skies are opened and the human essence transfigured is merged in that of the Deity.

With the masterpieces of the poets, the magicians who move the soul with woven music of words, the consolation of agony, the climax of Joy sweeping away in its clear-rushing stream stain of tears and brand of pain, is rare indeed. We tread uneasy on the "burning marle" again, and shapes awe-inspiring in their unceasing struggle, majesty, and beauty stand out against a sombre background of lurid, thunderous cloud. What heart, gripped and torn beyond endurance by the "Inferno" of Dante,

then half-soothed by the budding hope of the "Purgatorio", has been truly gladdened by the glacial effulgence of the "Paradiso"? What note of consolation, of true Joy, freed from heartache and foreboding is there even in the young loves of "Romeo and Juliet"; what, in the unutterable tragedy of "Hamlet" and "Othello", and "Macbeth" and "King Lear"? True, the comedies have the note of the skylark as well as that of the nightingale, and above all of them, "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and "As You Like It". But perhaps the serenest happiness of earth that poetry has given us is enshrined in that incomparable fifth act of the "Merchant of Venice", with its fair palace and garden steeped in the moonlight of Venice, and its happy lovers, from whose lips drop words of such beauty that, could we but hear them spoken as they deserve to be, our hearts might burst in sheer excess of delight. And yet even here looms dark across the joy incarnate, across the moonlight and the flowers, the shadow of the Jew's great agony. The note of unbodied joy that is a winged happiness is perhaps more clearly heard in detached pieces, such as the buoyant, lovely "L'Allegro" of Milton, and Wordsworth's "Sonnet on Westminster Bridge" —the latter breathing forth that highest of all happiness, the communion of humanity and Nature in one song of thanksgiving. In Robert Browning's inspired "Prospice" there is the self-same agony of struggle and the self-same transfiguration of the human soul that we find long afterwards in the "Death and Transfiguration" of Richard Strauss. Even Goethe, by nature serenest in majesty of all modern poets, has given no climax of radiant, unshadowed Joy, sweeping away all sorrow and

deformity of earth. Not even in the second part of "Faust", where poor Mephisto, defrauded of his lawful prey, is so scurvily treated by the rose-showering angels, and Faust is finally lifted to a mystic and heart-chilling Paradise by the prayers of "*una poenitentium*", that "one among the penitents" who was once the betrayed and agonized Margaret of the tragedy's first part. In the beauty of the "Iphigenia in Tauris" and the "Torquato Tasso" there is, there can be, no true gladness. In French poetry there is everywhere gaiety and charm, but hardly joy of the purest and highest kind. Is it to be found in the flower-like sweetness and the learning gracefully worn of Ronsard and the "Pleiade"? In the tragedians — Corneille the heroic, and Racine the poet of consuming love—we may not look for it. Throughout the great neo-classic comedy of Molière the whip of satire cracks, and Mirth holds its sides as the lash descends, with little of that mercy which is, after all, a modern growth, on the back of the fellow-creature. If we choose to look behind the veil we may find gnawing bitterness in the "Misanthrope", and still more in the self-mockery and disillusion of "L'École des Femmes". Even in Victor Hugo the optimist, the poet of humanity and its destinies, who stands awe-stricken and spellbound in his execration of the mighty past, and considers the present but as a bridge to the millennial future, the note of pure, radiant joy is not sounded, but only that of triumph at the dispersal of the black clouds of ignorance and depression, and the enthronement, in a reign of icy and terrifying bliss, of his great deified abstractions. Alfred de Musset, the exquisite prose-poet of the "Comédies et Proverbes", which stands so much

higher as imaginative literature than any of his verse, loves, as a rule, to force the thorn into his own heart while he rends that of the listener; to let him suck from the poet's lips the sweet poison all antidote for which he refuses for himself. But just *he* has once —in the beautiful dramatic poem "Carmosine"— achieved a climax of pure joy, the brightest and the most noble. The young Sicilian girl, Carmosine, loves despairingly her great King, seen for a moment shining and god-like, in a tournament, and she remains deaf to the suit of all meaner men. She must die in her unceasing love-agony, and the cry of helpless despair goes up from her father and mother —even from her faithful lover. But the Queen herself has pity, and leads her Royal spouse, in all his heroic splendour, to Carmosine, that in purest worship, and asking nothing earthly from her in return for her love, he may avow himself her true knight, and in his helmet wear her gage for evermore. It may be that we are not on the loftiest summits here, but the climax of the beautiful romance is enveloped in an atmosphere of Joy and Hope, without shadow or blemish, for which it would not be easy to cite a parallel in the literature of the time to which it belongs.

The plastic arts offer a not less wide range than Music or Poetry; in their power to express Joy, as an essential element of Life and Beauty, they stand midway between the two. So bewildering is the vastness of the field here, that one pauses hesitating amidst the myriad illustrations of the Joy celestial and the Joy terrestrial that comes nearest to it; of the Joy and the anguish unspeakable that together are Love; of the melancholy delight that is the refuge of man, worn and marred by Life, in the

bosom of Nature; of the Joy that is the yearning for, and the belief in, a dazzling Future of mankind which the Present gives itself up to fashion; of the highest Joy that is the willing sacrifice of brother to brother, the Love of mankind, the all-embracing kinship that overshadows and extinguishes all meaner and narrower desires. With the art of antiquity it is impossible to deal on the present occasion, even in a few bare, summary phrases. In the Early Byzantine or Late Roman art of the fifth century we have that most perfect of early mosaics, "The Good Shepherd", of the Monument of Galla Placidia at Ravenna—a conception bright with the Hope and the Faith that are Joy at its highest. Later on the Byzantine Christ is the *rex tremendae majestatis*, the sovereign ruler, serene and implacable as are the gods in the terrible "Song of the Fates", sung by Goethe's Iphigenia. Some scenes of the Life of Christ, however, which are later on reduced to the proportions of the "intimate" in art, are here given with grandiose magnificence and an overwhelming rejoicing of the heavenly powers. So in a tenth-century ivory, "Baptism of Christ", in the Library at Munich, in which the incident is depicted as one that moves the world to its centre. The sun and moon hang attentive in the heavens, a goodly company of angels cluster suspended in mid-air, spectators of the event, while on either side of the Christ, who shows royally majestic even in this act of humility, the waters, quivering, part, cut in twain to their very bed. When we come to the Italian *Trecento* we find many presentments, serene in grandeur, of the Joy ineffable that nowhere touches earth, its woes or its yearnings. Such are Giotto's "The

Translation of St. John the Evangelist", in the Cappella Peruzzi, at S. Croce, in Florence; the "Paradise" of Orcagna, in S. Maria Novella; and the great "Madonna, with Saints and Angels", of Simone Martino, in the Palazzo Pubblico, at Siena; while the fragility of earthly bliss and the unconscious cruelty of Fate are shown, with a naïveté that touches the sublime, in the "Triumph of Death", of the Campo Santo, at Pisa. Here the hideous Death, shaped as an aged crone, ruthlessly swings her scythe, and mows down the fairest company of happy lovers, depicted in youth's bloom and freshness, while the lame, the halt, and the stricken make in vain to her their frenzied appeal for release from torment and sorrow. It is a descent in many ways from the art that expressed itself in these vast and noble pages, even to the great Tuscan and Venetian art of the *Quattrocento*, so rich in observation of life, so firmly built up on the greater and wider realism. Ghiberti has something of the rhythm, of the serenity of Greek art, without its solemnity. Donatello, save in his romping and rebellious *putti*, knows no rejoicing—not even in his most moving representations of the Madonna and Child—but only the sublimity of the Divine Agony, the ardours of dramatic passion, the strenuousness of the human will. In Luca and Andrea della Robbia we have the consolations of maternity, Divine and yet so human; and built round these the joys of Heaven. The Joy of Fra Angelico is the brightest, the purest, the simplest, the most childlike; but it is not the joy that conquers and tramples sin; rather is it the joy that is ignorant of the strife and the torment that rend the soul. Botticelli's expression of heavenly and earthly rapture is

a fever, a frenzy, that dropping may well leave heart-sinking and mere emptiness. If this is less evident in his beautiful renderings of the "Adoration of the Magi"—the two early examples in the National Gallery, the famous one in the Uffizi, and the yet lovelier and more dramatic "Adoration" at Petrograd—we have passion and unrest at its height in the "Nativity" (Plate VI.) of the National Gallery and the great "Coronation of the Virgin" in the Accademia of Florence. And who shall venture to say whether Leonardo's "Gioconda" is the expression of serene joy and perfect balance of beautiful body enshrining beautiful soul, or whether these eyes of mystery and this unfathomable smile are the symbols of an absolute detachment from the passions of humanity, of a solemn wonderment at the secrets of Nature revealed behind their luminous veils to the unwearied gaze of the god-like mortal?

If there is Joy anywhere it is in the great works of the Venetian school. Peaceful, serene, warm with the pulsation of humanity, and yet soaring effortless to the Divine, is Giovanni Bellini, in whose train follow worthily Cima and the rest. The Joy of earth and life is at its highest point in Giorgione, and the more poignant in exquisiteness for the indefinable sense of apprehension at the fragility of happiness that pervades it. Joy in the beauty of Nature, in the voluptuous charm of woman, in the steady-glowing radiance of the Divine is in Titian, who, while in old age he loses something of hope and comfort, rises yet higher in flight than heretofore, as, trembling, awestruck, he fixes his gaze upon the undecipherable mysteries of the Infinite outspread before him. No art conceived and realized by the brain of mortal is so joyless in its majesty

as that of Michelangelo. For him heaven is a limitless vault of lead, unpierced by any ray of consoling brightness; and in its mist of sighs and tears, fitfully illumined only by livid lightnings, man, titanic in power and in effort, yet relentlessly crushed by the celestial thunderbolts, vainly struggles for light and guidance. The exquisite grace, the matchless suavity of Raphael rise often to a greatness that overpowers with the Divine music of the spheres the sound of the furiously raging human tempest. But in this wondrous harmony is rarely, if ever, to be heard the note of true Joy, flaming skywards in resistless aspiration. In the seventeenth century—the age in Italy and France at least of arid official splendours, of tasteless exaggeration, and mere emptiness—we must look for it in the more intimate reflections of the soul-life that the genius of some great masters vouchsafes to us. And, save in the case of Rembrandt alone, even these joys are those of earth, mere smiles of the sun between large spaces of darkness. In Rubens it is the unbridled *joie de vivre*, the Bacchanalian lust, of the "Kermesse" (Louvre) and "The Worship of Venus" (Vienna), or the Joy of conjugal love, reposeful and confiding, in the "Portrait of the Painter, with his first wife, Isabella Brant" (Munich). With Rembrandt infinite pity, the spirit of brotherhood with humanity, is the keynote rather than joy. When this is attempted it is of the lower order, and he becomes as gross as Rubens, as superficial in gaiety as Frans Hals. But the "Christ Healing the Sick", the "Christ at Emmaus" (Louvre), the "Good Samaritan" (Louvre)—these breathe forth joy of a kind that has nothing in common with mere physical gaiety

and lightness of heart. Velazquez, save in such examples of forced and rather mechanical mirth as "Los Borrachos", knows no true rejoicing, even in the humanity which with so matchless a power he portrays. Haughty and reserved, with a dull fire smouldering at his heart, that but rarely flashes out into clear flame, he is now resentful, now mocking in his great series of portraits of dwarfs and buffoons—humorous with a vein of sadness in the magnificent "Æsopus" and "Menippus". When he forces his gaze upwards, into those regions where his fellow-countrymen love to dwell in spirit, he is of ice. In "Las Hilanderas" more than in any other work of the great master's maturity is to be found a true note of buoyance, a delight in the rhythm of life—a generalized truth of the noblest and highest, such as the Greeks displayed in the great friezes of their temples.

In the eighteenth century we are again in a different atmosphere. In France the so-called "elegant frivolities" of Watteau—frivolities only to those who take literally these tender, beautiful shadows of amorous dalliance—have no true note of rejoicing, or even of gaiety. They exhale rather a subtle and poignant pathos, akin, in some hardly definable way, to that of Giorgione. In Chardin the simple pleasures of the home life and the family are most truly and tenderly studied, and with a most moving simplicity realized. In French portraiture of this age, especially in that of the most brilliant portraitist of them all—La Tour—what strikes the beholder is not so much the veritable joy in life as the sparkling gaiety that good manners have made second nature; the invincible optimism, the *désir de plaire*, which is the national character-

istic. Hogarth makes the cry of physical delight in life ring out clarion-toned in "The Shrimp Girl" (National Gallery), much as Goya does later on in his kindred work, "The Milk Seller" (Buda-Pest Gallery). For an infectious delight in the joys which are in a region above these, but yet still of earth, we must look to the portraits of Reynolds, Gainsborough, and their contemporaries. If Sir Joshua takes a calm pleasure in the beauty of womanhood and of maternity, his enthusiasm is still greater in the presence of manhood heroic in deed or in spirit. But his Joy bursts out full and unrestrained in his portraits of children, and draws forth their love and jollity, as the sun's radiance draws forth the bloom and the beauty of flowers. Less tender, as a rule, is Gainsborough, whose fair, modish dames and bright-eyed febrile gallants are more self-centred. Yet he, too, on occasion shows a true delight in the exquisite moments of life unsullied, as in one of the most beautiful pictures of the eighteenth century, "The Morning Walk" (Tring Park). In the portrayal of a youthful married couple, both in the fresh bloom of youth and the early springtime of love, he realizes once for all, without rhetoric or sentimentality, one of those "heures exquises" which, alas! do not recur in life, with whatsoever strenuousness of passion we may seek to recall them.

The nineteenth century has been one of tormented development in every direction. Only its truest and most vital art has a deep significance and a close relation to the passion and effort of the time. This art, whether in its endeavour to reflect in an idealized and poetized shape that passion and that effort, or in the expression of fastidious disgust

for its own prosaic environment, has been coloured —in some instances stained—in the struggle against hostile surroundings, in the struggle for self-expression and for life. And though the art of this wonderful time has expressed every shade of lyrical beauty, of passion, of rebellion, of despair, of mournful pathos, it has not, save in the rarest instances, breathed forth pure joy, other than the irrepressible physical rejoicing in existence. Turner, the greatest genius in English art, if not in all respects the greatest painter that England has produced, is, next to Michelangelo, the most solitary, the most joyless of all creative artists. You could never truly say of his great inventions what a French critic so gracefully said of the landscapes of Hook—that they seemed to breathe forth a hymn of thanksgiving. He stands forth as mighty as Lucifer, as sad, as utterly alone! And our Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood has ever shown the traces, the scars of its noble effort to return from foolish, outworn conventionalities to the truth. Rossetti, ardent poet of the brush and the pen, puts life-blood and the heart-beat of passion into the romance of past days; he sings all songs but that of Hope and Joy. Millais and Holman Hunt are virile and splendid in endeavour, less ardent, perhaps, and nearer to earth than their brother in art, but more hopeful. The "Chant d'Amour" and all the songs to Beauty and Love conceived and painted by Burne-Jones are full of languor, even though it be cunningly clothed in the glorious colours of Hope and her train.

The greatest artists of France, those who have regenerated her schools and led them to victory, have lived in an atmosphere of battle and storm-cloud that shuts out the sun. True, Ingres had—

in art, though by no means in life—much of the calm and of the exquisite suavity of his idol, Raphael. But Delacroix's great life-work expresses the very essence of the human tragedy. And the so-called Romantic school of landscape—that of Rousseau, Jules Dupré, Millet, Corot, Troyon, Diaz, and Daubigny—has evoked all the moods of Man, and of Nature responding to his call, save only that of pure joy. Millet sublimely symbolises acceptance of a crushing Fate, of an implacable Divinity, of a Nature too often harsh and cruel to the children of earth, who humbly, patiently endure to the end. Corot luxuriates in a delightful dreaminess, in a tender melancholy that is not far from happiness, yet is too hushed, and, moreover, too egoistic, for joy. In Manet, in Whistler, in Degas—as with many great innovators—the true personality is too closely veiled to be easily penetrable. Claude Monet, the worshipper of Nature in the myriad garments of light and shadow in which she wraps herself, is, indeed, joyful with a cold and equable joy, because he reads into the appearances of the world nothing of the mystery that is hidden beneath them. In no painter of modern times was the spirit of buoyancy, of primeval vigour—of the lower and the higher Joy—so intense as in the Swiss master, Arnold Böcklin. His "Spring's Delights" ("Frühlingsreigen"), in the Dresden Gallery, has once already been described in these chapters. Joy in the renewal of earth and her loveliness has never been celebrated with a more passionate enthusiasm. In Fritz von Uhde, who, with Rembrandt as his exemplar, has sought once more to humanize and modernize all the great scenes of the sacred drama, the note is again, as a rule, less that of Joy than of a

pensive and all-embracing sympathy, from which hope is not shut out. Yet the spiritual Joy is strong and light-giving in his beautiful triptych of the "Nativity", which now adorns the modern section of the Dresden Gallery. In the central panel, bathed in a flood of moonlight, the childlike Virgin kneels before the Divine Infant in a placid adoration that no foreboding yet tinges. To the left approach the shepherds, rugged and worn—in outer aspect merely Bavarian peasants of to-day, yet transfigured from within by the glow of their worship. To the right a company of child-angels—Bavarian, too, and of to-day—cluster thick on the eaves, and there, reading out of their little song-books, like Raphael's choir of angels in the "St. Cecilia", lift up their sweet young voices in praise of the new-born Christ. No shadow of the Passion and the world-tragedy to come darkens the pale, clear silver of the moonlight or disturbs the peace of a scene sublime because from its spiritual beauty all earthly pomp, all vain display have been banished. We could not more fittingly than with the mention of this beautiful and peculiarly modern work bring to an end our remarks on a subject all too vast for the summary treatment which it has received.

VII

MUSIC IN ART

GIORGIONE—"LE CONCERT CHAMPÊTRE."

The Louvre.

MUSIC IN ART

This is a subject so vast, so all embracing, that he who attempts it might well, while writing down these very words, pause, and then turn away in dismay. It may be approached in so many different ways and under so many different aspects. Many volumes might be written as to the representation of musical instruments and the simulation of song in art; any such scheme, however imperfectly realized, would take us through the whole of ancient and modern civilization, beginning with Egypt and Crete and ending with our own times. It would lift us to the highest heavens, where resound the soul-shattering trumpets of the angels, where pulsates in mighty rhythm their cosmic song; it would evoke now visions of armies awakened to conflict by the hideous clangour of brass, now rich summer silences through which softly thrill the sounds of lovers' lutes. We should see how the pleasurable pain of vocal effort imparts something of human stress even to the serenity of the angels, how it lifts and transfigures the downrightness of vigorous youth; how by a bond strong, though invisible, it unites for one blissful moment two human souls. There is, however, an infinitely loftier point of view even than this, from which we may look at the theme chosen. At their highest point, and reduced to their vital characteristics, Music and Art are one in essence; or, to put it otherwise, Art is Music. But not alone " such notes as warbled to the string drew iron tears down Pluto's cheeks ", not those notes

alone that " the soul of Orpheus sang ", are such Music; but in a wider and more comprehensive sense, proportion, ordered arrangement by which beauty is made to emerge, disentangled from the merely individual and accidental, and thus lifted to its true significance. These vital things are music, too; and that is mightiest of all by which, though we miserable mortals hear it not, because our senses are too gross, because the hideous din of life obscures it, the world is moved. The greatest Music is that whose immutable laws move the spheres in their places, whose awful silent harmonies affright us, as the spirit of the *Makrocosmos* did Faust; for hearing them we may not live.

In this sense the structure of the Parthenon is a music, and a music more wonderful still, in the strength and subtlety of its rhythms woven into a perfect unity, is the Panathenaic frieze, which once adorned the cella of that, the world's most perfect temple. In this sense the great west fronts of the French cathedrals are symphonies of plastic and spiritual beauty, radiant and awe-striking in their orchestral splendour. And what thunderous and earth-shaking music, how terrible and yet how pathetic in appeal, is that of Michelangelo in the Ceiling of the Sistina! More penetrating, more expressive of eternal law, more truly sphere-music is the art of Leonardo da Vinci; more soothing and harmonious in its perfect spiritual and technical balance that of Raphael. The music of Rembrandt, though it has not the perfection of form that dominates and holds in restraint even the most intense passion in Beethoven, is in its rugged beauty, in its heart-searching pathos, akin to this. And yet this comparison, though perhaps more apt than the all

too familiar one with Michelangelo, is faulty in many respects. For the ardent human passion, the brotherly love and kinship of Rembrandt are subject to no control, to no abatement, and never rise to the austere grandeur—so human, yet hovering so high above humanity—of Beethoven. Yet through sheer love, through the understanding of human sublimity and human lowliness, Rembrandt penetrates to more secret recesses of the human soul, and touches chords more mysterious in tenderness than those which the great high-priest of symphony has at command. And Velazquez: what music pervades his work, unique in technical inventiveness, and in the beauty which arises out of accomplishment achieved and severely subordinated to fixed purpose? To say too hastily—as those might who worship Velazquez for his marvellous technical power only—that music is absent from work which more than ever holds the world, would be to place it on a lower level than by common consent it occupies. His Music, his rhythm is new and strange, it is of a type unknown to the Western world until he came; it is governed by no law but its own. It is music of irresistible sweep, of splendid though subdued harmony, but such as does not raise the work which it informs to the regions where dwell those whose power of divination, whose power of expression is of a higher order. It is music astonishing in novelty, in strength, and flexibility, but muted, sombre, and unconsoling, lacking the saving quality of hope which may go even with supreme tragedy.

To attempt on the present occasion any exposition of the subject Music in Art from this higher standpoint is impossible: the horizons that open

out before the bewildered gaze are so immeasurable; the theme is so nearly that of the universe and its unfathomable mysteries, against which human conjecture, however sublime in audacity, hurls itself in vain. All that can be done here is to give more or less at random, a few salient examples of art which not only attempt the actual representation of music and song, but is in the higher sense pervaded and enriched by it. The examples that immediately present themselves are the familiar ones of the "Adoration of the Lamb" (Plate XVIII.), by Hubert and John van Eyck, of Donatello's great composite altar of bronze in the *Santo* of Padua, and of Luca della Robbia's Singing Gallery, once in the Cathedral of Florence. But let us for a moment turn back to the *Trecento*, and to the Church of St. Francis at Assisi, where, in the Chapel of St. Martin (in the Lower Church), painted throughout by the great Sienese master Simone Martini, is representation of singing and playing upon musical instruments more closely observed, more beautiful still, than that of the later masters. In the fresco, "The Arming of St. Martin by the Emperor Julian", we have a lute player, and one who sounds twin pipes such as shepherds use: and behind them a group of tonsured priests who lift up their voices in song that seems to be of praise and thanksgiving. And this is not merely a subordinate incident, but one which gives colour and solemnity to the entire scene. In another fresco, "The Funeral of St. Martin", the master represents, as no painter has done before him, not only the spiritual but with absolute truth the muscular expression of white-vested priests, who, full voiced, as the movement of the lips indicates, give forth a ceremonial dirge. Such audacity in realism, com-

bined with such loftiness in expression, has hardly again been achieved in pictorial art.

Familiar are the two great panels of the "Adoration of the Lamb" (Plate XVIII.), which show respectively singing angels and angels playing upon musical instruments. Hubert and John van Eyck, similar in this to Simone Martini, who worked a century before them, did not scruple, even in depicting the angels, to realize, with the absolute concentration of self and shutting out of the external world that music brings with it, the greatness of the mental but also of the physical effort, and its effect on the facial muscles. Following the supreme masters of the school, but with infinitely less daring, Memling has, in a fashion relatively timid and unconvincing, depicted singing and music-making angels, surrounding a Christ as "Salvator Mundi", in a vast triptych which came from a Spanish monastery, and is now in the Antwerp museum.

Again we turn back for a moment. Looking first at classical and then at pre-classical antiquity, we shall find some curious results as regards the realization in art of the wonderful action of singing. In the Panathenaic frieze of the Parthenon we seem to hear the measured march of those who take part in the procession, the clamour of the terrified beasts, the clatter of the horses' hoofs, the cries of the leaders; but not the choric song of the maidens, marshalled by their chorus leaders. Any such realistic representation of singing would have disturbed the serenity which, combined though it is with the most energetic movement and the highest degree of vitality, is the keynote of this processional act of worship. Turn back, however, a thousand years or more, into the mysterious art of pre-classical times

that has been revealed in Crete, and in the mainland of Greece, and you find a marvellous, indeed an unique, representation of singing. This is on a steatite vase, found at Hagia Triada, and a reproduction of which is to be seen in the British Museum. Standing out in relief, there passes round the body of the vase a harvest procession of men with sheaves and reaping implements. Boisterously they sing, with mouths wide open, as they march along, drunk with wine and sunlight. The musician who marches in front both sings and plays. This relief, which is tentatively dated about 1600 B.C., reminds us not so much of Simone Martini's minstrels, or the Van Eycks' music-making angels, as of those ruthless peasants of the Abruzzi, in D'Annunzio's tragedy, *La Figlia di Iorio*. This passing reference is but a momentary excursion into Music in Antique Art—a subject which cannot be so much as attempted on the present occasion. The object has been to indicate that in the remotest antiquity, and then again in the *Trecento* and the *Quattrocento*, the view has been taken by artists that the act of singing provides painting and sculpture with great and heroic motives—none the less great and heroic when treated with an unflinching truth that fears not to be mistaken for ugliness.

We move onwards again, and come to the famous angel-musicians of Donatello, bronze reliefs which now adorn the restored high altar of the *Santo* at Padua. Of these some sing, while others, the majority, draw music from the simple instruments in use at that time: flute, harp, mandoline, drum, violin, cymbals, tambourine, double pipes. There is solemnity, a certain radiance, in these figures; but not the exuberant joyousness that we

find in Donatello's pulpit attached to the Cathedral of Prato, and, in an intensified form, in the *Cantoria*, or Singing Gallery, carried out by him for the Cathedral of Florence. Not less famous is the companion *Cantoria* carved and erected by Luca della Robbia in the same Cathedral, but now in the little museum of the Opera del Duomo, overshadowed by Brunelleschi's great dome. With a serenity in joyousness to which neither the Sienese master nor the Netherlandish, nor even Donatello himself attained, the suave yet virile Florentine sculptor has imagined not winged angels, but blooming boys, girls, and children singing, with accompaniment of lute, and harp, and tambourine, and cymbals—some stationary and wholly given up to their song, some circling in measured dance as they sing, all exultant and, as it were, intoxicated with their own music. What gives to this work its unique beauty and significance is that music is here seen transforming all that it envelops, making its own atmosphere, through which human effort—joy as well as sorrow —appears lifted, transfigured. Though in that atmosphere truth shows as truth still: and the higher for being thus irradiated with a beauty that emanates from the hidden source of all things, and by its glow reveals deep-hidden secrets of man and of Nature that not the written word, however inspired, that neither the brush nor the chisel of genius, can unaided interpret. Thus Poetry and Plastic Art acknowledge the supremacy, the transforming power of Music.

Later on we shall see how Botticelli in his choric songs of angels whirling in the mystic dancing and singing as they move—how Signorelli in his " Pan Listening to the Voices of Nature ", have lifted the

veil for a space, and made faintly audible to the listener that sphere-music the sublimity of which mortality is too weak to bear. We shall see how Venetian art in its early prime—the art of Giorgione, and Palma, and the youthful Titian—is all tremulous with sweet sounds of lute and pipe—with the breath of love in the exquisite moment of pause and expectancy. We shall see how in Raphael's " St. Cecilia " the song of the heavenly host poured forth above holds, mute in rapture and thanksgiving, the sweet saint of music herself; enthralling, too, and by an invisible tie of linked sweetness making one, the Apostle armed with word and sword, St. Paul, and the fair sinner sanctified by love and penitence, St. Mary Magdalene.

Some mention should have been made in the preceding notes in this same subject of Piero della Francesca's great " Nativity ", in the National Gallery, with its choir of angels, lofty, impassive in their perpetual youth, pouring forth limpid, effortless song in praise of the infant Christ, who lies at their feet, worshipped with the same radiant calm by the kneeling Virgin. It is impossible to imagine a greater contrast than this affords to Botticelli's perfervid " Nativity " (Plate VI.) in the National Gallery. With Botticelli, swayed by the wind of passion, sacred and terrestrial, the singing of the angels is an integral and almost imperceptible part of the universal harmony, of the universal ecstasy, not a passionate uplifting of voices after the fashion of men, not a praising of the Almighty with an effort that has something of pain in it. It is one with the rhythmic circular movement, with the floating of bright hair and diaphanous draperies, with the evocation of pure and celestial beauty, that in itself

is worship. We see this garland interwoven of flower-like beauty, we hear this choric song of the angels, moving round the central group in the master's great "Coronation of the Virgin"[1] at the Accademia of Florence; we see and hear it again, circling in a rhythm more equable, less broken by throbbing impatience to advance, above the thatched shed open to the four winds of heaven, in the "Nativity" just mentioned.

Most wonderful of all is the representation of the heavenly host in one of the great drawings by Botticelli for the "Divina Commedia," once in the Hamilton Palace collection, and now in the Berlin Museum. Around Beatrice and Dante move in concentric circles the whole hierarchy of heaven, filling the air with their pennons and sceptres and shields, with the rush of their wings and the flutter of their garments. Above, in the highest heights are the Seraphim, next the Cherubim, then the Thrones "of Divine aspect"; and below them, in due order of precedence, the Dominations, the Virtues, the Powers; the Principalities next, below them the Archangels, and last of all the Angels. And these the poet sees and hears "*osannar di coro in coro*"—singing hosanna (contrapuntally, as it were) from chorus to chorus, in praise of the Almighty, of the mysterious "Fixed Point," which maintains them—and ever will—in their appointed places. Most solemn is the act of worship of those highest placed in the hierarchy, most passionate in praise the song of the archangels and then of the angels below. Bewildering is this celestial beauty, this world-music; and the beholder, though it is but an outline drawing, black upon white, that meets

[1] Now in the Uffizi.

his eye, recoils abashed. The loftiest expression of Botticelli's art is not in any great altarpiece, nor in any allegory of Spring and Love; but here in this evocation of the ineffable, in this realisation, to eye and spirit, of the glory that surrounds, and with song and dance most solemn, most joyful, worships the great First Principle, the " Fixed Point " of the world. The highest expression of the Divine in its human aspect, of God in His kinship with Man, is the " Adoration of the Lamb " (Plate XVIII.) of Hubert and John van Eyck; the highest expression of the Divine in its celestial aspect, in its cosmic harmony, is this " Paradiso " of Botticelli.

The " Pan Listening to the Voices of Nature " of Luca Signorelli (now in the Kaiser-Friedrich Museum) is unique in Italian art. It is a philosophic allegory, and one which has no doubt its own precise and limited significance, its special programme. This may have been dictated by one of those much-adulated court humanists of the *Quattrocento* who so condescendingly admired and with so limited a comprehension directed even the most renowned painters — industriously seeking out subjects for them in the late Latin poets whom the men of the early Renaissance knew better, and held in higher esteem, than we do. But this concerns us less than does the great superstructure of poetry that Signorelli has built upon this foundation. The poet-painters—the Florentines, the Umbrians, and, above all, the Venetians—took their themes obediently enough from these scholars of much learning but only moderate inspiration. But for the most part, they were not concerned to adhere too closely to the programme furnished; they dreamed their own dreams, and often—luckily

for their fame and the joy of succeeding ages—with slight regard for the true meaning of the legends supplied to them. In the midst of this great heroic picture of Nature Pan sits enthroned, the god of earth by his shaggy legs and goat's feet, but the god of celestial aspirations by his halo of the horned moon, his garment bright with stars, and still more by the sublime radiance of his upward gaze. His own pipes silent and disregarded, he listens at the bidding of an aged man—the personification, no doubt, of some elemental force—to the flute-playing of beautiful naked youths—divinities of earth, it may be—and to a goddess or nymph, heroically nude likewise, who draws sounds from a long, reed-like pipe. The earth, the heavens are here but one music, all-enveloping, all-penetrating; a music that moves the globe and all the myriad stars in their courses; a rhythm that expresses the great first principle of life.

Mantegna, in the famous "Parnassus", painted for Isabella d'Este, and now in the Louvre, shows, with a mixture of rugged grandeur and suave harmony, the nine Muses, dancing and singing to the music of Apollo's lyre. The great Paduan has probably been inspired here by the marble relief known as "Les Danseuses Borghese", formerly in the Borghese collection at Rome, but now in the Louvre. Yet how more vital is the conception of the Italian Master, or, if you will, the re-invention of the motive! The representation of singing is given with a realism that recalls that of Simone Martini, Donatello, and Luca della Robbia, yet, as the occasion warrants, with a greater dignity. The choric song of the goddesses lifts the whole scene to its proper place, and imparts something of its lyrical character to the insolent triumph of Mars,

Venus, and Cupid and the impotent wrath of Vulcan—expressed in a group somewhat cynically imagined, which forms the apex of the picture.

Music, not in a literal sense only, but in that larger sense which in a previous article I have attempted to define, fills the art, both sacred and secular, of Venice, but rarely rising to heights sublime, as it does in the art of Florence and Umbria, but in its warm golden atmosphere, now of sacred passion, now of terrestrial fervour, enwrapping "Sacred Conversation" and "Amorous Conversation" alike. The music-making angels in Giovanni Bellini's great "Madonna Enthroned, with Saints" at the Venetian Accademia, those more childlike and less impressive ones—veritable *amorini*—at the base of the Frari "Madonna" of 1488, not only hold the sacred personages and their worshippers in rapt attention to their sweet tinkling sounds, but indicate time-spaces, pauses of sweet peace and harmony. A more sublime note is struck in the great "Madonna with Saints, and the Doge Agostino Barbarigo", in the church of S. Pietro Martire at Murano, wherein the cherubim are seen pouring forth their song above the throne, while below two flower-crowned angels, lofty and reserved though radiant in youthful beauty, play upon viol and lute. In the beautiful "Madonna Enthroned, with Saints" of S. Zaccaria in Venice, painted by Giovanni Bellini in 1505, a music audible to the spirit only (symbolized by the holy calm of the single viol-playing angel) holds together in pensive harmony the Virgin, the infant Christ, and the saints, who stand, all-penetrated with Divine love, silent nevertheless in worship, and withdrawn within themselves.

It was not until Giorgione came that the joy of the

world, the beauty of humanity, the poetry of life as it is, was fully expressed in art. The French art of the later Middle Ages—of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries especially—had, indeed, sought on the basis of contemporary literature to suggest both in carved work and in painting the freshness of spring, the poignant beauty of youthful love, whether happy and unspotted or sombre and passion-stained. But the renascence of life and love that the Venetians depicted in the first years of the sixteenth century was more passionate, more far-reaching. This art gave the throb of the world released, the stream of life-blood that vitalized and revealed in a new beauty both Man and Nature. The typical example is Giorgione's "Concert Champêtre" (Plate VII.) in the Louvre, a work in respect of which—and for this let us be thankful—a narrower, a more precise and scholarly designation has not yet been put forward. Here, indeed, is the moment of pause and peace, when the waves of passion droop and subside, when it is not lost but in suspense; when recollection and expectancy afford a moment of higher beauty and rapture than fruition can ever give. The Music of lute and pipe and clear, live water are here the outward expression of the love that is sensuous delight and pause after storm; but, more than that, it is the love that harmonizes fair, human creatures and keeps ever-young the world that environs them. A chord of more intense vibration is struck, a deeper, a more beautiful mystery is approached, in Titian's early Giorgionesque poem-picture (*poesia*), "The Three Ages" (Plate IX.), which is in the great collection at Bridgewater House. Here sensuous ardour rises to the point of spiritual passion. The two lovers—the youth, nude as a Greek

shepherd, and the fair, richly-robed, flower-crowned Venetian woman who woos him—listen together to the vibration in the air of the double pipes, from which she has just drawn sweet, long-drawn-out notes. The little *amorini* for a moment sleep; but winged Amor, their chief, still watches; passion has sunk to calm, but love still endures. Deeper in the landscape an ancient bearded sage sits, holding a skull in either hand—a symbol of the decay of life, and with it even of love, a symbol of the vanity of all human things. But yet *this* moment is sweet, it has the exquisiteness that cannot come again, the heart is pierced and tears are near, tears of a rapture that is too full for utterance save by weeping.

The magic power of music is more gravely, with not less of poetry though less of rapture, demonstrated by Titian in the famous " Concert " of the Pitti Gallery, ascribed at one time to Giorgione, and, indeed, by some eminent critics still held to be one of his most typical works. A young ecclesiastic, whose beauty is haggard already, whose flaming eyes are the windows of his soul, turns round to gaze at an older man, as he draws harmonies from a keyed instrument upon which his hands are resting —an electric current of sympathy passing from him to this companion, a tonsured priest of grave, interrogative mien, whose right hand is laid upon the shoulder of the player, while his left grasps the neck of a bass-viol. One touch of music makes the whole world kin! Some sixty years later, when he was nearing the end of a phenomenally prolonged career, Titian painted the " Nymph and Shepherd ", which is now in the Imperial Museum of Vienna. Here the aged master becomes a poet once again, and paints with a higher pathos than before. The

scene evoked is a similar idyll, the shepherd clothed this time, and leaf-crowned, while the disdainful yet amorous nymph wooed by him with sound of pipe and passionate word appears nude, save for the diaphanous scarf which droops from her shoulder. The colour is a wondrous brown-and-silver monotone; the voluptuousness heightened by the sting of a sadness, which is that of old age, is hard to match. This is the last love-song of the aged painter and poet; as the joyous colour has died out, and there is left but a beautiful tone, as of silver dimmed, so the life has darkened and diminished, though passion is more restless and painful than before. Soon the master-hand will drop nerveless, the dreamer of fair, sad visions will cease to dream, and all will be silence.

A great world-harmony it is that Tintoretto sounds in the "Apollo and the Nine Muses" at Hampton Court. No music has a more magnificent sweep, a rhythm more powerful or more flexible than this. The Muses are floating in the clouds, some with musical instruments, one, curiously enough, playing upon a spinet, others holding respectively a book, a chart, a globe. The centre of a dazzling sunset, Sol is vaguely discerned as a divine prescience, darting forth rays which gild great spaces upon the fair bodies of the goddesses, leaving others in transparent shadow. But the noblest music is not that made by the Muses, it is that made by the painter. His mighty hand sweeps across the strings of the lyre that he has fashioned for the delight of the world, he draws from it such sounds as by their magic cause the very gates of heaven to move asunder. Here Music is shown, not only as the central principle of art, but as the central principle of the world, the spiritual essence of all created things.

VIII

DANCING IN ART

WATTEAU—"LE BAL CHAMPÊTRE."

The Dulwich College Gallery.

DANCING IN ART

DANCING has been, from the remotest past down to these fitfully brilliant days of restlessness and hurry, a vehicle for the expression of amorous inclination, of erotic passion from the lowest to the highest, but also of heroic daring, of religious ecstasy, and, beyond all these things, of a suavity suggesting the rhythm of beauty, the rhythm of life, the hidden rhythm of the world. Even the passion of the human voice, of the human gesture, emphasized and broadened, even these supreme modes of expression, supported and reinforced, though they should be, by the divine colour, the divine pulsation of music fail to convey certain phases of superhuman joy, of desire for the infinite, certain moods of what might be called Praxitelean or Correggiesque suavity, in which intensity of passion on the one side and exuberance of joy on the other are so attuned as to make a sphere-music of their own, outside and beyond the regions where humanity has uncontrolled sway. Kings and rulers, those whose voice and whose onward march had led the peoples, scrupled not, having raised their voice in song, by the rhythmic movement of their limbs, by the ecstatic expression of joy and beauty in the dance, to exalt and to celebrate the Divinity. When Moses and the children of Israel had sung their sublime song, did not Miriam, the prophetess, take a timbrel in her hand, and did not all the women go out after her with timbrels and with dances? And did not David,

bringing back the Ark, "dance before the Lord with all his might"—despised by Saul's daughter, Michal, who saw but the abasement of the king before the common people, and understood not the supreme homage, the supreme surrender of self, that neither deed not song could unaided convey. We shall presently see the angels themselves, radiant yet solemn in joy, circling in the heavens to music unheard by mortals. This sublimity of the dance at its highest it is the great merit of Richard Strauss to have divined and expressed, as no other dramatist, composer, or creative artist has done. Putting aside for the moment the erotic dance of Salome, so poisonous in its fascination, we may take that infinitely more significant dance of Elektra who, powerless any longer to breathe forth in vibrant speech or soaring song her superhuman ecstasy in the horrid triumph achieved, devotes the last moments of her ebbing life to the rhythmic dance that shall still more greatly thank and exalt the gods. And in the wonderful symphonic poem, "Also sprach Zarathustra", the climax is a glorious, world-compelling measure, to the music of the shining stars. The prophet and seer, whose joy in the universe, its beauty, and his domination, speech has commemorated to the full, now turns to a form of celebration more glorious still in its rapture—to that of song and Dance in which the whole soul goes out and merges in the infinite.

It is only during the last fifty or sixty years that in England supremely skilful and expressive Dancing in combination with the mimetic art, which is, or should be, a branch of it—that is to say, the ballet in its highest and most poetic form—has lost its significance. With us, though not in Russia,

France, Germany, Austria, or Italy, the ballet has become merely a gay, trivial form of amusement, devised chiefly for the exhibition of terpsichorean gymnastics, of a dazzling yet unsatisfying splendour in scenery and dresses, of an equally dazzling splendour in the female forms so lavishly displayed.[1] It is to the Russian Ballet that we owe an awakening to the possibilities of a forgotten art which may have results memorable and lasting, not only as regards the rehabilitation of fine and truly expressive dancing, but in relation to dramatic art generally. Beauty and the higher significance were ever the aim of those who devised and those who performed the ballet spectacles of antiquity. The *Pyrrhica*, which in its original Greek form was the severe military dance of Lacedemonians and of Cretans, with rhythmical marchings, countermarchings, and evolutions, became in its late development a ballet-mystery, with wondrous scenery and effects, a mimetic drama, and the most elaborate dances. Apuleius describes a notable *Pyrrhica*, the Judgment of Paris, and shows how the Greeks of the late time sought to weave into a congruous whole music, dance, and scenic environment—just as to-day the accomplished Russians join together in the subtlest harmony these same elements of beauty. Music, measured and solemn, accompanied the entrance of Hera, the martial Doric mood expressed Pallas Athene, voluptuous Lydian strains introduced Aphrodite. We are less attracted by the further description (recalling the current British conception of beauty in scenic effects) of " Mount Ida, with real, living bushes and trees, real goats browsing, and real water in its many fountains ". Another favourite

[1] This article appeared on July 24, 1911.

Pyrrhica of the late period was on the loftier and more grandiose theme of Dionysus invading India—boys and girls being imported expressly from Asia Minor, and trained to execute the alternately strenuous and voluptuous Bacchic revels. On the present occasion it is, unfortunately, impossible to describe even in outline the hieratic and symbolic dances, the frenzied saltatory acts of worship, the elaborate ballet-like ceremonials, as we find them, commemorated in Egyptian, Oriental, Cretan, and classic sculpture—and more rarely in painting. We must hasten on to the later mediæval period, to the Renaissance, to modern times.

In the thirteenth century art had hardly acquired sufficient flexibility to allow of a true representation, or even suggestion, of dancing. Grotesque, and yet quaint and touching in its naïveté, is the " Salome dancing before Herod ", sculptured on one of the rich portals which adorn the west front of Rouen Cathedral. Here the daughter of Herodias, like some acrobat of the Middle Ages, literally stands on her head that she may the more surely captivate the morose king. Giotto, in the fresco of the Peruzzi Chapel at Santa Croce, gives us a Salome as massive and grandiose as she is inert and uncharming; but the Sienese Ambrogio Lorenzetti, painting not long afterwards, in the Palazzo Pubblico of Siena, the fresco known as " The Blessings of Good Government ", devised as beautiful a group of fairly-attired maidens dancing in a ring as art can show until we come to Mantegna. Known to all are the beautiful child-angels—or sacred *putti*—who dance and romp through the frieze of the exterior pulpit with which Donatello, aided in the architecture by Michelozzo, enriched the exterior of the cathedral at Prato.

Akin to these, but perhaps more vigorous still, and with less of cosmic suavity, are the child-angels who in joyous procession pass dancing along the front and sides of Donatello's *Cantoria*, once in the Cathedral of S. Maria dei Fiori at Florence, but now in the little museum at the back of that mighty church. A suave and virginal grace is breathed forth by the delightfully fresh and naïve group of dancing, frolicking girls which the Milanese Michelino de Besozzo (if we are to accept him as the painter), in the early fifteenth century, painted on the walls of a chamber now included in the Palazzo Borromeo at Milan. Here we have neither angels nor goddesses, but merely fresh young flowers of maidenhood. A gentle rhythm stirs the angels of Fra Angelico, who, hand in hand—a very flower-chain of fair appearances—move in brightness through his frescoes and panels, celebrating the joys of Paradise and the glory of Christ. But Botticelli's angels whirl in an act of worship less serenely joyous, more passionate, more mysterious. In the great " Coronation of the Virgin " at the Accademia of Florence[1] the central group of the Blessed Virgin, crowned by the Eternal, is encircled by a ring of these beautiful winged creatures. Hand in hand they dance around the flower-strewn floor of heaven —exultant, unceasing in their act of adoration, that seems a surrender to the Creator of their whole being, that being which is but an emanation from His glory. Not less beautiful than these are the dancing and singing angels who, in Botticelli's " Nativity " at the National Gallery, circle hand in hand in the refulgent skies—a celestial choir bearing olive-branches and bands with crowns dependent

[1] It is now in the Uffizi.

from them. Mantegna, with a certain austerity that does but add charm to the chastened voluptuousness of his rendering, depicts in the " Parnassus " (now in the Louvre) the Muses, singing and dancing in honour of Mars and Venus, who stand forth enthroned and triumphant in love, while Vulcan, flouted by Cupid, vainly scolds and vociferates, Apollo, a somewhat mean figure, harps on industriously, and Mercury, leaning upon a strangely hirsute Pegasus, calmly awaits the turn of events. The central idea for this group may possibly have been derived from the well-known Graeco-Roman relief, " Les Danseuses Borghese ", now in the Louvre; but, if so, Mantegna has surpassed his model. Wonderful is the unity in variety of the circular movement, here and there accented and broken; wonderful the classic grace, touched with a Quattrocento individuality, of the dancers moving in the rhythm of the universe.

The so-called Dances of Death of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries constitute a special branch of the subject which it is impossible here to treat in detail. The *Todtentanz*, or *Danse Macabre*, was originally a dramatic representation performed much as the mystery-plays were performed, and much favoured, if not actually undertaken, by the clergy. These Dances of Death were both simple dramas—short cruel dialogues between Death and his victims —and dances or processions. From the fourteenth century onwards they were common in France and Germany, and thence passed to England and Spain. In the places where it was the custom to perform them, these semi-sacred dance-tragedies were perpetuated by means of mural paintings, and sometimes also in sculpture. The remains of two important

series of Death groups are to be found at Bâle, the earlier, done for the monastery of Kingenthal in the fourteenth century, the later for the Preaching Friars at the end of the fifteenth. As is only natural, the earlier Death Dance, altogether more Gothic, is gentler, less uncompromising in the conception. The later is daring in the caprice and variety of its figure of grim Death—moralizing, yet bitter and ironic, in tendency. In one of the elaborate panels by the Franco-Fleming Simon Marmion, illustrating incidents in the life of St. Bertin (Kaiser-Friedrich Museum), there is painted on the stone wall of a courtyard—with a boldness in foreshortening nothing short of astonishing for the second half of the fifteenth century, to which the panel belongs—a Dance of Death which even on this very small scale is seen to be of extraordinary animation and decorative effect.

It is in error that the two tremendously dramatic Death series, executed by Hans Holbein, the younger, are called—or have frequently been called —Dances of Death. The *Todtentanz-Alphabet*, it is true, follows to a certain extent the old formula of the wall-paintings, and in single designs shows Death ruthlessly falling upon, and not without a certain rhythm in action, dragging forth his prey. Astounding is the dynamic force, the dramatic grip, the variety of these miniature designs. Yet they are greatly surpassed in tragic intensity, in lofty ideality of conception, by the later series of pictures from the same hand, which was first published in 1538, at Lyons, with a French text, and this quaint title: "*Les simulachres et historiées faces de la mort autant élégamment pourtraictes que artificiellement imaginées*". That grandeur is independent of mere size was never more clearly demonstrated than in

these unpretentious little woodcuts. There is nothing more sublime in the art of the sixteenth century than the " Death and the Husbandman ", nothing more heart-searching than the " Death and the Married Pair ", nothing more awful in directness than the " Death and the Gambler ". But of the Death Dance, the impetuous onward sweep of man towards annihilation, there is here nothing left. Let us turn away from these terribly blunt, cruel reminders, which supreme genius transforms and renders august, though still, in conformity with usage, infusing into them nothing of mitigation or consolation. There is hardly anything in art that realizes the lower *joie de vivre* with a physical force so intense, with an exuberance so unbridled as Holbein's " Dance of Peasants ", which formed the chief mural decoration of the so-called Haus zum Tanz, and down to the middle of the eighteenth century was preserved at Bâle. A great drawing in the Bâle Museum gives an exact rendering of the whole design in its original shape. To the rough, shrill bagpipe tunes played by rustic musicians, how these short, thick-set, lusty peasants, old and young, storm along, linked the one with the other! All measure in jollity is cast to the winds; they shout in their joy, and tumble, and hunt each other like wild beasts gambolling. The hair of the maidens, the hats of the young bachelors, are crowned with flowers, and the note of folly is still further accentuated by the presence of the fool. The note is one of primitive brutality, though not yet of absolute bestiality. There is nothing in art to match this " Dance of Peasants " until we come to the great " Flemish Kermesse " of Rubens in the Louvre; and there animal jollity is pushed to a point where it becomes

an upheaval of all the lower passions, a frenzy of unbridled lust. Rubens, who has thus greatly dared—sinking his peasants into the trough where they are on a lower level than the wild beast—rises, nevertheless, to the heights, in virtue of a conception into which the rhythmic force, the whirlwind passion of the master, infuse a certain poetry, akin to that which informs the Greek representations of the satyr in hot pursuit, or of the faun whom the fumes of wine have overwhelmed and plunged into stentorious slumber. A further section of this fascinating subject will take us into regions more civilized, where the dance will cease to have the deep import which hitherto has marked its highest, but also, in another sense, its lowest manifestations.

The art of the sixteenth century in its decline did not rise high in its representations of dancing, although the age was one which sought to express its amorous inclinations, its precious elegance, its culture, in measures stately and of a decent voluptuousness. Court marriages and splendid ceremonials were the chief occasions in connection with which monarchs and great nobles exhibited their majesty and their skill in the dance. Shakespeare shows us Henry VIII.—more energetic, as we may infer from the text, than graceful—dancing at the feast and ball given by Cardinal Wolsey, and succumbing then and there to the fascinations of his partner, Anne Bullen. As heavy-footed, as masterful must the Royal amorist have been who speaks thus:

> "Good, my lord cardinal, I have half-a-dozen healths
> To drink to these fair ladies, and a measure
> To lead them once again; and then let's dream
> Who's best in favour. Let the music knock it."

Dancing was throughout this period the obligatory accomplishment of all Royal and noble personages; and in its strongly marked rhythms and figures they expressed not only the grace and splendour of life, the relation of sex to sex, but lofty condescension and the imperiousness of those who may not be thwarted. Two rather ugly and dull pictures in the Louvre show faithfully enough, yet in spiritless fashion, balls at the Court of the Valois. One is "Un bal à la cour de Henri III", in which the lords and ladies of the Court are seen dancing in a ring under the eyes of Henri and his mother, Catherine de Médicis. Smaller but more interesting is the "Bal donné à la cour de Henri III à l'occasion du mariage d'Anne, Duc de Joyeuse, avec Marguerite de Lorraine". The spectators are again Henri III. and his mother, and with them are the Queen-Consort, Louise de Lorraine, the Duc de Guise, surnamed *Le Balafré*, and Marguerite de Navarre. With a great assumption of dignity the self-conscious bridegroom leads out his bride, and, with her, moves in slow, solemn measure down the centre of the ornate chamber. Even more than the sixteenth century, the seventeenth was the age of ballets. These were danced not only by trained executants, as in succeeding reigns, but also, and indeed mainly, by the most high-placed seigneurs and dames of the French Court; even by Louis Quatorze himself, who in the heyday of his youth and manly beauty figured, without loss of dignity, in many a splendidly-adorned ballet, and danced, moreover, not only well for a king, but with genuine grace and charm. A contemporary painting some years ago reproduced in the French magazine *Les Arts*, the authorship of which

had not then been traced, depicts the king as the *premier danseur* and central figure in an entertainment of this kind. No Le Brun, no Van der Meulen, no Rigaud, has, all the same, ventured to present *Le Roi Soleil* thus, and we should look in vain for the *Ballet du Roi* in the great series of Gobelin tapestries from the designs of Le Brun and Van der Meulen, which commemorate the various striking events, pomps, and ceremonials of his reign.

One great master of the seventeenth century, Nicolas Poussin, depicted the dance as perhaps no painter of modern times has done—scorning, however, the personages and costumes, the formal conventions of his own time, and revelling in the heroic nudity of classical mythology and scriptural history. His starting-point was no doubt the Bacchanal of Titian (Prado Gallery at Madrid), with its simple dance of lusty, bronze-limbed reveller and fair, ample, Veneto-classic nymph or mortal. But in this particular—if in this only—Poussin has gone far beyond his illustrious predecessor; he divines, under the impulse of the later Greek art, all that the rhythmic action, the rhythmic enlacement of nobly fashioned human bodies may be made to express and to symbolize. Let us take as examples, not the well-ordered "Dance of the Seasons to the Music of Time" (Wallace Collection), not the dance of the Children of Israel around the Golden Calf; but—to show the art at its highest in two opposite phases—the superb "Floral Offering to Hymen" in the collection of Sir Herbert Cook at Richmond, and the "Bacchanalian Dance" in the National Gallery. In the former all is fine balance, equal measure, linked sweetness long drawn out—

all is, to use the expressive phrase of Baudelaire, *calme, luxe, et volupte*. Far higher and greater is the inspiration in the "Bacchanalian Dance". Poussin's audacity is here not less than that of Titian, hardly less, though quite other, than the gross and fleshly audacity of Rubens. But a certain note of austerity, tempering Dionysiac frenzy, renders possible this linked dance of male and female votaries of Bacchus, so marvellously various, so powerfully accented in its unity. No classic relief of the later time can show a Terpsichorean revel to match this in vital force and changeful beauty. If Mantegna surpasses all that antiquity has produced of the same kind in his "Triumph of Julius Cæsar", so has Poussin in his "Bacchanalian Dance" expressed a classic motive with a finer sense of its plastic significance and artistic possibilities than is shown by any late Greek or Græco-Roman of them all.

The eighteenth century was the age, above all others, in which painters busied themselves with the dance, making it the central feature of many a pastoral, many a *fête galante*, many a courtly festivity and rejoicing. The great vital force, however, that lies at the root of the higher dancing was during this period in abeyance; all was prettiness, charm, amorous enticement—flutter for one ephemeral moment of youth and joy. Watteau cared not, here or elsewhere, to represent human passion at its highest, but delighted in depicting the gentle consentaneous movements of two fresh young bodies, the union for one blissful moment of two fresh young souls. The enchanting "Le Bal Champêtre" (or "Les Plaisirs du Bal") (Plate VIII.) of the Dulwich Gallery realizes, as only the poet-painter of

Valenciennes can, the fleeting hour of exquisite bliss: the noble colonnade with great trees framed in its arch, and the gleam, the plash of the silver fountain in between; the great company of joyous yet quiet revellers, the happy couple of dancers in the midst, who, moving with a sweet seriousness, express not only their own joy, but that of the fluttering throng around them. And, through it all, the strange sense that all Watteau's finest work conveys—the sense that this fair picture, that this bliss of one happy moment, will fade and fade, will darken and darken, until it sinks into night—the night in which dwells ever, solitary and unconsoled, the spirit of the hapless painter of *fêtes galantes*. The famous "Embarquement pour Cythère" itself might almost be explained as the crowning scene of some beautiful immaterialized ballet. It is quite possible, indeed, that Watteau, an ardent amateur and constant frequenter of the theatre, may have derived the first idea of his master-work from some piece of this type, celebrating the voluptuous delights and all-compelling power of Venus. The Dance—this time bolder in elegance and more professional—forms the chief feature of Watteau's singularly fresh and delightful "Fêtes Vénitiennes" in the National Gallery of Scotland; it enlivens "Les Noces" (Soane Museum), "Le Menuet" (Hermitage), "Marriage Rejoicings" (Dublin), and some other examples, which on this present occasion it is unnecessary to enumerate. More attractive, more touching than any of these is "La Danse" (or "Iris, c'est de bonne heure avoir l'air à la danse") —one of several superlatively fine examples of the master to be found at Potsdam. The fresh young beauty who, facing the spectator, is about to execute

the steps of a minuet, charms as a rosebud does, which as yet is hardly unclosed; Watteau, who relies but rarely on the facial expression of the individual, has in the tender, appealing look of the young dancer suggested delight in the life to come, but also interrogation of the future, and that vague foreboding which is inseparable from the tragedy of ardent youth.

Lancret is the painter in ordinary of the ballet and of famous danseuses; bright, gay, cold, and with an occasional touch of irony *à la Marivaux*, he is neither the seer of dream-visions nor even remotely conscious of that persistent Fate beneath momentary, diaphanous delights which casts a shadow over the art of his master. He can depict gaily-decked youth winding in serpentine figure of lively dance through park-like glades to the sculptured fountain from which bubble waters ever fresh and cool, as in the delicious "Danse à la Fontaine de Pégase" (Potsdam). His peculiar delight is to render in a delicate framework of shimmering grey-green landscape the victorious charm of flower-enwreathed Camargo, one of the two great dancers of his day. The finest version of the subject is that of the Wallace Collection, but there are original variants in the Hermitage and the Museum of Nantes. The Neues Palais at Potsdam holds yet another and more developed version, in which the Camargo is less convincingly presented with her male partner in the dance. Lancret painted also a companion picture showing Camargo's rival in the good graces of the public, the charming and immaculate Mdlle. Sallé—presumably as Venus, since she is attended by three female dancers, who, grouped together, do duty as the Graces. This painting is known to me only

through the engraving by Laurent Cars, who reproduced also the "Camargo essayant un nouveau pas" of the Wallace Collection. I will once again quote the famous lines written by Voltaire on the two danseuses, not improbably upon contemplation of their counterfeits by the sprightly Lancret: "*Ah! Camargo, que vous êtes brillante! Mais que Sallé, grands dieux, est ravissante! Que vos pas sont légers, et que les siens sont doux! Elle est inimitable, et vous toujours nouvelle; Les Nymphes sautent comme vous, Et les Grâces dansent comme elle.*" Never did the fashionable poet-philosopher prove himself more adroit than when he held the balance between the two divinities of the ballet—doing the fullest justice to the Camargo, yet allowing his marked preference for her softer and more feminine rival to be divined by those who knew how to read between the lines.

The name of Fragonard is closely connected with that of a dancer famous in France and hardly less so in England. I refer to Mdlle. Guimard, the most worshipped *ballerina* of her day, even though she was nicknamed by her detractors—and they were many—*Le Squelette des Grâces*. He undertook to decorate for her a boudoir in her miniature palace in the Chaussée d'Antin—the *Temple de Terpsichore*, as flatterers had named it. Somehow the work did not progress to the entire satisfaction of the capricious divinity. The end was that the passionate, volatile "Frago", exposed to the airs, this time untempered by graces, of the queen of stage and boudoir, finally threw up his nearly completed task in anger, and, what is more, by no entreaties of the Guimard could he be persuaded to resume it. Are we to take as authentic, or merely *ben trovato*, the anecdote which shows the exquisite

painter of erotic genre taking the most amusing vengeance on his tormentor? According to this legend he found his way back into the central salon which was his creation, and, seizing the brushes of his successor, with a few deft strokes transformed his own portrait of Terpsichore into a very Tisiphone, with eyes shooting forth baleful fire and lips from which the smile has vanished that had enchanted all Paris. It must be owned that the main decoration by "Frago" of the Guimard's salon, as seen in the collection of Madame Camille Groult, betrays no trace of any such amusing perfidy on the part of the painter. In her costume of stage-shepherdess, with her powdered hair, with the roses and ribbons of her hat and dress, she stands—assuredly not beautiful, and yet irresistible—smiling in triumphant security at the spectator as she takes up the rose which is the keynote to one of her fascinating *pas*.

One master has in the nineteenth century raised the study of the dance—though only of the Grand Opera ballet—to a level undreamt of since austere Nicolas Poussin, without descending from his heights, set nymphs in an Olympian harmony of motion or drove them whirling in a Bacchic frenzy in worship of their god. I refer, it need hardly be said, to Degas. In his work there is not that decent voluptuousness, with a latent touch of austerity, which delights us in Mantegna, and again in Poussin. There is but austerity, a grim irony too, a pitiless exposure of the sordid ugliness, the painful toil, the paintiness, the harshness, the misery which here are, as it were, a preparation for achievement in the choregraphic art. Not often does Degas allow the glamour of the footlights to hide this strenuous effort, this sordid ugliness, this harshness

and misery. The blinding glare in his wonderful presentments of dancers, arrayed sometimes all in white, sometimes in the hues of the rainbow, seems but to add to the aridity, the artifice, the cruelty which this art suggests. Something of the bitter philosophy of life is in it, written with the brush by a sage who neither laughs nor weeps, but remains ironical even in his mute protest. He would scorn all the same to indulge in symbolism or depart from the straight path of a selective representation. Of the scope and significance of its work genius is not always completely conscious, and it may be that the French master has been less deliberate in the expression of his view of life than I have imagined. High above all this, and wholly apart from the underlying meaning that there may be in it, there *is* a great, I had almost said an august, beauty in these studies of dancers linked in harmonious figures, broken up with great pauses into groups, and then again into successions of single performers. The rhythm that is in them—the rhythm that Degas has unveiled to our astonished gaze—is so strong, so subtle, so compelling, that, if I dared, I would call it cosmic. The links are but these over-trained, harsh-favoured, pitiable creatures, who suffer that they may contribute to the æsthetic pleasure of the onlooker; but once those links are joined and the current of mystic harmony established, then out of these elements, in themselves seemingly so miserably small and mean, there is created a great and wonderful thing. It is as if the piercing, interpretative gaze and answering hand of genius were laying bare for us, who have seen and heard and yet not truly known, some essential harmony, some deep-lying vital principle of those which move the world.

IX

LOVE IN ART

TITIAN—"THE THREE AGES."

The Earl of Ellesmere.

LOVE IN ART

"Love is strong as Death."

To show how the passion of love at its highest point of expression has pervaded and coloured art, not, indeed, since its beginnings, but so soon as the subtler refinements of technique have fashioned an instrument capable of interpreting the subtler refinements of feeling—this would, indeed, be the noblest and most attractive of tasks. But it is one for the full accomplishment, the full exposition of which in its fair highways, and still fairer byways, a goodly volume, and not a short and inevitably desultory article, would be required. All that I can do on the present occasion is to touch lightly upon a few of the most significant points that suggest themselves in connection with a theme which, as sacred and purely human love, as the humanly divine and the divinely human, is the very life-blood of the truest art: that in which is interpreted the infinite tragedy, but also the infinite mystery and the infinite beauty of life. And note that—leaving out of consideration for the moment human worship of the Divine, the Divine Love itself, and the paternal love which is nearest to it in expression, as in essence—the expression of the higher love by no means invariably runs parallel in life, in art, and in literature. There are periods when life is rude and rough and broken, and full of the sternest and most hideous realities, and when, nevertheless, the most exquisite flowers of the love that is higher and more complete than mere sexual

attraction (though it is that also) rise in spiritualized passion and perfect beauty from the blood-stained, battle-worn earth, and unfold themselves to the full, unscorched by the horror and the terror of their surroundings. Often enough, it is true, do art and literature run in sympathy, the one inspiring and completing the other: literature, on the whole, the pioneer, showing the way to her sister; as when the French poems and romances of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries inspire, and with their pathetic naïveté and wistful charm colour, the more intimate secular French art of the early fourteenth. One wonders how far that unique phase of Greek art and feeling which expresses itself so intimately in the stele or funerary relief—the great sculptural embodiment of sorrow and yearning, beautified by resignation and acceptance—may have inspired some of the most touching epitaphs and memorial verses of the Greek Anthology, so many of which, however, are of much later date than the sculptures. The exceptions are, however, so many and so striking as almost to make a rule of their own. The age of Giorgione, the love-poet who towers above all others among the painters, the age of Jacopo Palma and the young Giorgionesque Titian, is not that of the most ardent or the truest love-poetry in Italy, though it is the age—a revival of romance, quaint and fanciful rather than passionate—which culminates in Ariosto. Then the age of Ronsard and the Pléiade in France, that in which love, or the fanciful and passionate expression of love, is the chief business of literature, if not of life, coincides with what is, on the whole, a singularly stiff, dry, and expressionless phase of French Renaissance art. And similarly our Elizabethan

age, which has surely expressed the love-passion with a more overwhelming force and intensity than any other, coincides with a phase of Anglo-Netherlandish art in England, the most repulsive in its rigidity and total lack of aptitude for rendering expression of any kind that could be imagined. The age of Louis XIV. in literature is, notwithstanding its repellent love-phraseology—its chilling use of such words in the mouths of lovers as "inimitié" and "gloire" and "mérite" (!)—the age of deep and lasting love, and of that love-friendship for which the French, above all other nations, have a genius. Remember that it is that of "Phèdre" and "Andromaque", of the "Princesse de Clèves" and the "Letters of the Portuguese Nun". And yet little or nothing of all this is allowed to pierce through the official art of the period—the formal and pitilessly splendid portraiture, the frigid allegory, the monumental decoration which has the *Roi Soleil* for its central divinity, and for its chief inventor and organiser Charles Lebrun. Strange to say, it is to the austere Poussin that we must go for the note of human pathos, for which amidst all this decorative beauty and appropriateness, but, alas! also this aridity, so intolerable a yearning arises. The "Narcissus and Echo" is a love-poem of the most penetrating charm; the "Et in Arcadia ego"—that scene in which strong-limbed shepherds and fair maidens so naïvely, in the midst of freshness and happy love, set themselves to decipher the half-effaced inscription on a tomb—is, in spirit, as in externals, of the most truly classic pathos and beauty. The power to move of a Watteau is not in the frivolous *conversations galantes* which he selects for representation, and

by the magic of his art transfigures; it is in the indefinable melancholy of his attitude towards the tinsel joys upon which he looks, as spectator, and not as participator.

As early as the fifth century B.C. we find in sculpture, still Pheidian in type, a love-poem, most moving in its very restraint. This is the " Orpheus and Eurydice ", of which the finest example is in the Naples Museum. The agony of parting, the infinite pity, the fate that may not be defied, these things are here tempered to serenity and beauty; and their power to move is thus greater and not less. Of the Attic stele or funerary relief I have already spoken above. Here it is generally the beauty of conjugal love, the ideal side of the family life and the family intimacy, that is suggested; and the sorrow, beyond loud and futile lament, for youth cut off in its flower, and age left to look on and wonder. Most beautiful of all these grave-reliefs is that one in the Museum of Athens, which shows an elder of noble mien fixedly gazing, in sorrow and in pity that are boundless, and yet in resignation that rises superior to complaint, at his son, a mighty young hunter, whose manly beauty is that of the immortals, whose vigour seems as inextinguishable as theirs. To match this expression of paternal love we must travel through many ages, and come to Carpaccio's painting, in the famous St. Ursula series, " The Departure of the Affianced ". Here the king, taking eternal leave of the golden-haired boy who goes, not without foreboding, to his doom, bends over him with a look in which is summed up a lifetime of love. No cry of anguish, no gesture of despair, could pierce the heart as does this parting smile. Stern Rome it is that furnishes us with the

most intense expression of enduring conjugal love, established on a base so solid that the waves of passion may shake but can no longer move it. This is the so-called " Cato and Porcia " of the Vatican, a double portrait in which the sculptured figures, almost stern in their steadfastness of mutual devotion, are seen to be united for all time in spirit as they are here, in the eternal marble, in body. To match this intimacy of expression, so unexpected in Roman art, we must again pass onward through the procession of the years, and pause before that page in Albrecht Dürer's great series of woodcuts, " The Life of Mary ", in which Joachim meets Anna before the Golden Gate and, folding her in his embrace, tells, or rather leaves to be divined, the joyful tidings. No passionate interlacement, no frenzied ardour of youth surging against youth, equals this going out of soul to soul that is one with it in love, as it has been in sorrow and humiliation.

The dalliance, the prettiness, the spring freshness of love, the beauty and harmony that there are in loving, these are the chief themes of the French carvers in ivory who, in the earlier half of the fourteenth century, delighted, remembering those prose-poems, the love romances of the thirteenth century and of their own time, to ornament, above all, mirror-cases, but also combs, caskets, boxes, and other objects of the toilet. We find among the subjects represented Tristram and Iseult in amorous converse, spied upon from above by a King Mark, watchful and fierce, whose image, startling the lovers, is reflected in the pool below. And then " Sir Huon of Bordeaux " is illustrated in similar fashion, and the " Chastelaine de Vergy ", and the legend of King Alexander, Aristotle, and the

courtesan, Lais, and many another romantic legend and story. In " Sir Huon " the favourite subject is the game of backgammon between the hero and the lady, at which (much as in Hogarth's famous picture, " The Lady's Last Stake ") the lady risks her virtue, while (unlike the smart young soldier of a more prosaic age, who risks his purse only) the hero stakes his head. The mediæval sculptor, discreet and reticent, leaves us in darkness as regards the ultimate issue, assuming, no doubt, full cognisance of the story. The favourite subject on these mirror-cases is, however, " The Assault of the Castle of Love ". Here amorous knights upon splendidly caparisoned horses are seen advancing to the attack on a castle by no means formidable, and well-pleased ladies, " *nobles et honestes dames de par le monde*," make resistance in form only, finally meeting the attack with an enthusiastic surrender.

The mediæval Italian art, though it shows similar designs in some of the fourteenth-century marriage caskets, fashioned of ivory or bone, is as a rule much less concerned with love for the sake of love, with the naïve realization of amorous dalliance between individuals, than is the French. True, Florentine art of the *Quattrocento* is brimful of allegories of love, of love feasts, of Triumphs of Amor over Mankind, and of Castitas over Amor (after Petrarch), of classic legends in which love plays the chief part—such as " The Judgment of Paris ", " The Rape of Helen ", and " Orpheus and Eurydice ". For Petrarch it is *not* true that Love is strong as Death. For him, if Chastity triumphs over Love, Death or Fate (Atropos) triumphs over Chastity, and brings everything toppling down with the touch of her annihilating spear. Then Fame

rises superior to Death, but Time again weakens and kills even Fame—the Glory of God, that is Eternity, triumphing lastly over all. The National Gallery shows a curious and rather perfunctory "Combat of Amor and Castitas" by Cosimo Rosselli, and the Wallace Collection a strange allegory of the Cruelty of Love which recalls more or less the same master. In this last, Venus, enthroned on a splendid chariot of beaten gold, bears in triumph on her car a luckless mortal attached naked over a live brazier, the flame of which is fanned by a cupid—her steeds the while dragging her chariot-throne to the edge of sheer rocks, which may bring welcome release to the victim. But in all this there is only the literary symbolism and not the flesh-and-blood passion, the actuality of love; the individual, unless he be either god, hero, or philosophical symbol, is not deemed worthy of representation. Quite otherwise is it with the Venetians. With them all life thrills through with love and exists mainly for lovers happy and unhappy; allegories are turned into realities, mythology into humanity, the gods (as in old Giambellino's last picture, formerly at Alnwick) are come to earth, and in the semblance of man all the more strongly assert their divinity. It is as if Giorgione had unsealed the eyes of Italy and set free to flow through art the life-giving and death-dealing waters of love. The exquisite moment of pause and peace in passion, the moment of a divine repose between the storms, is suggested as it never was before in his famous "Concert Champêtre" (Plate VII.) of the Louvre. But Titian, in whom Giorgione lighted the flame, has perhaps in "The Three Ages" (Plate IX.) of the Bridgewater House Gallery rendered the

same motive as beautifully, though otherwise. The dreamy shepherd and his amorous shepherdess are alone with their love and with Nature; the moment of pause that the vibration of sweet music fills is, for them, the short space that may never come again, just as it is now. Palma must not be compared on equal terms with the two greatest poet-painters of Venice, whose contemporary and companion he was. His is an atmosphere of earthly passion and languorous sensuousness that does not exclude poetic beauty, but rarely generates love-poems that rise to the highest level. One great exception is the intensely human and, in its very reserve, greatly moving "Meeting of Jacob and Rachel", in the Dresden Gallery. Lorenzo Lotto is in portraiture possessed—indeed, as some hold, distorted—by his sympathy for the love troubles of his sitters. See the "Man with the Golden Claw" —the fairly-fashioned, strong, delicate weapon that rends the heart—in the Imperial Gallery of Vienna; see, in the Borghese Gallery, the "Man with the Death's Head beneath the Roses", with the mortal wound, spiritual or physical; see the "Lucretia killing herself" (the lady who, assuming that rôle, doth protest too much!), of Dorchester House. But the most wonderful love-poem of Venetian sixteenth-century art is perhaps the "Nymph and Piping Shepherd" of the Imperial Gallery at Vienna—Titian's farewell, in old age, to life and love. It is twilight, and soon will be night, with him; it is twilight, and soon will be night, with the lovers, it may be, who dally still in the darkening air shot with silver. The poetry of the early years has come back, intensified by something of remorse, and of foreboding. This last passion has something that

the earlier passion had not; in one sense it is nearer to earth and earthiness; in another it is infinitely higher and more far-reaching, more typical of the love that in its heights and depths, in its tender light and sombre, fitfully illumined shadow, is truly that which to the end of all things must hold and possess Man.

X

DEATH IN ART

Photo. Bulloz.

A. BARTOLOMMÉ—"LE MONUMENT AUX MORTS."

Père-Lachaise Cemetery, Paris.

DEATH IN ART

"How wonderful is Death."

But a few short weeks ago I had to treat of a subject seemingly far away from this one, and yet how near!—that of Love in Art. So inextricably are the two interwoven, that, when I think over the instances to be given in illustration of my present theme, I find myself suddenly face to face with many of those which have already served. It is not alone that in so many instances—as in the moralizing designs of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and in some modern paintings in which the same spirit is revived with a difference—Death is delineated as the antithesis, the negation of Love that is the heart of Life. It is that the aim of the higher and nobler art has so often been to show the intensity of love, the intensity of faith, the intensity of gratitude and worship, hovering round, and beautifying Death[1]; to show how this love may evoke, and in the eternal marble or bronze sublimely record, a memory of the great, the well-loved dead that is in truth a new life, seeing that it is an embodiment of that memory, fainter, it may be, than the literal truth, but also higher and nobler, inasmuch as it is freed for ever from the disturbing elements of suffering and decay. It is thus the conception of the poet and seer whom Love, or the dramatic conception of Love in others, inspires. It

[1] This article was published in the *Daily Telegraph* of May 28, 1910, following the death of Miss Eugénie Phillips, Sir Claude's favourite sister, on the 10th of that month.

is the conception of one who sees Death as it is; not alone as the grisly terror, the blind, remorseless Fate that looks not to the right or to the left, but with its chariot-wheels crushes out Youth and Love, Age and Majesty alike; but also as the consoler, the beautifier, the revealer of the great and wonderful mystery, from which the obscuring veil of time and suffering has been drawn aside, that there may be shown to the loving, awe-stricken gaze of those who are left, Man battling no more with the great riddle of Life, but sunk, in utter confidence and peace, into the eternal slumber. On the one side art in dealing with Death has come to the aid of those who are less anxious to commemorate the departed than to warn the living by examples drawn from human anguish, human abasement, and human nothingness. The warning is of the equality before Death of Pope, Emperor, King, on the one hand, and the common folk, slaves of the earth, who sweat and agonize in the struggle for life, on the other. But it is, above all, of the swift approach, the resistless, unreasoning force of the Destroyer, who comes sometimes indeed in might and majesty, with beat of drum and blare of trumpet, but too often with noiseless tread and icy, numbing touch, stilling the heart-beat, quenching the passionate love and passionate hate alike, freezing into nothingness the lofty and the mean ambition, sparing not even Charity, which is the higher, the more impersonal love. This is Art that takes upon itself the questionable part of the moralizer, the preacher, the tormentor—harsh and cruel, to be kind. Stepping outside the circle where it reigns supreme in solemn beauty into the region of terror and agony, where man is scourged in order that he may be healed, it

too often, unless it be practised by men of supreme genius, ceases to be Art—becoming but the image placed at the service of the spoken word, and to be judged, not by its beauty, but by its power to strike the beholder with awe and panic fear. This may appear but so much audacious paradox when we remember the various "Dances of Death" of the Middle Ages, and above all the famous engraved series of Death Pictures by Holbein; when we remember the "Knight and Death" of Dürer, and the "Death the Strangler" of Burckmair; and many a wonderful thing of this kind that Teutonic art has produced. Yet these are but the exceptions which really go to support the view which I have endeavoured to put forward. What are all these wonderful moral conceits, these shattering terrors, that a touch of grim humour mitigates, when weighed against the august and consoling revelations of the beauty and majesty of Death, as we find them in some Italian masters of the *Trecento* and the *Quattrocento*, and especially among the sculptors of the latter period?

We have seen that the Greeks in their pathetic commemoration of the departed on the stelæ or funerary reliefs sought to realize in idealized form the everyday life in its moment of vanished delight; or the subdued anguish of farewell at the parting from the gracious consort, from the son in the heyday of strength and manly beauty. Hardly ever did the image of death itself or of the actual fading out of life appear on those marble reliefs and funerary sculptured vases. And in the great royal monument, too, erected by the sorrowing Artemisia to her King and Consort Mausolus, there is from the base to the apex of the monumental pyramid a

kind of crescendo of architectural splendour rising to the climax of the great carved chariot, in which stands, Jupiter-like, Mausolus himself with his spouse, the widowed Artemisia, not in lamentation, but for ever erect and triumphant at his side. It is not until the Middle Ages and the Renaissance that we find the beauty and solemnity of Death, the trust of the departed in Divine clemency, made the chief theme of tombs and mortuary monuments. To enumerate a tithe or even a hundredth part of these would be impossible. Wonderful for its period is the monument of Henry the Lion and his spouse in the Cathedral of Brunswick. Some two centuries later come the magnificent tombs of the Dukes of Burgundy, Philippe le Hardi, and Jean Sans Peur, by Claux Sluter, his predecessors and his followers, now preserved in the Museum of Dijon. Here, as in so many of the French and Burgundian tombs of the fifteenth century, the attitude, the aspect, is one of eternal rest and peace, but the hands are nevertheless raised and pressed together in prayer. A notable monument of the Burgundian type, belonging to about the year 1480, is that of Philippe Pot in the Louvre. Here we come almost too near to the dramatic scene of burial itself. The black-armoured, helmeted knight, his hands uplifted in prayer, is borne along on a great marble slab by a procession of black-robed *pleurants* or mourning figures, who, mysterious, with faces overshadowed, seem perpetually to advance in solemn rhythm and cadence. The Italian tombs of the *Quattrocento* provide a wealth of wonderful examples. The one to which Englishmen will at once turn, remembering Ruskin's impassioned praise, is that of Ilaria del Carreto, by Jacopo della

Quercia, in the Duomo at Lucca. Slender, delicate, in the freshness of youth and beauty she lies, still richly habited in her earthly vesture, dreaming her eternal dream, with hands folded on her breast; at her feet nestles her faithful dog. Here there is silence eternal and sweet repose; the feeling is, much as in the Greek funerary reliefs, that of a spiritualized existence akin to the life of earth, but unstained by the misgivings, the agonies of that transitory phase. Splendid in gravity is the recumbent figure of Benozzo Federighi, Bishop of Fiesole, in his sepulchre by Luca della Robbia, now removed to the church of the Santissima Trinità in Florence. In the two famous monuments of Santa Croce—that of Leonardo Bruni by Bernardo Rossellino, and that still more exquisite one of Carlo Marsuppini by Desiderio da Settignano—the central figures are less significant perhaps, from the point of view which we are now discussing, than the rest. But in the tomb of Cardinal Jacopo of Portugal by Antonio Rossellino, at S. Miniato, above Florence, the recumbent figure of this prelate and Prince of the Church, who was prematurely snatched away ere his life was well begun, has a radiant youth, beauty, and purity, an expression of serenity and trust that are well-nigh unique in art. Spotless in life—as the unicorns testify which, as emblems of chastity, adorn the base of his monument—he sleeps an unruffled sleep that no jarring note through the centuries has disturbed—with a faint expression of regret just resigned on his beautiful face, such as may be seen on that of a child who has passed from tears to smiles. But a later tomb, that which in the first quarter of the sixteenth century was carved by Agostino Busti to the glory of the youthful

commander, Gaston de Foix, who perished victorious in the battle of Ravenna, is perhaps more moving still. The *disjecta membra* of this elaborate monument are scattered through the galleries and collections of Europe, but luckily in the museum of sculpture of the Castello Sforzesco of Milan is preserved the central figure of the dead warrior. On his winding sheet he lies fully armed, with the victor's crown of laurel binding his brows, with face upturned, and the hilt of his sword, splendidly wrought in the form of a cross, on his breast. His face, of a plastic beauty akin to that of a Greek god, is illumined, even in death, by a subtle glow. His day's work is nobly done, he is victor in the righteous cause; and serenely—almost joyously—with an ineffable smile playing around the lips scarce fringed as yet with manhood's growth, he yields his soul to God.

Though the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries produced much magnificent work, many monuments of extraordinary dimensions and phenomenal elaboration, these periods may for our present purpose be treated as non-existent. The emblems of Death, the plastic and pictorial symbolisms which gathered around it, were, or gradually became, so much funeral stock-in-trade, to be decently and appropriately employed, no longer for the purposes of intimate personal expression, but as common forms universally understood, and classed among the official trappings of woe. In modern times—throughout the nineteenth century and onwards—a nobler conception of death in art obtains. As fatal, resistless, terrible in mystery, yet august and indefinably consoling, Watts has represented it in his " Love and Death " and other kindred inven-

tions. The renowned French sculptor Rude, in his "Napoleon awakening to Immortality" (Louvre), has shown, as no other modern artist has done, that transition from bodily death and physical annihilation to the radiance of immortal life which Richard Strauss has so marvellously indicated in the climax of his symphonic poem, "Death and Transfiguration". But the modern work coming within this category, which of all others has made the strongest, the most pathetic appeal to the heart and soul of the nations, is A. Bartholommé's great "Monument aux Morts" (Plate X.), in the cemetery of Père-Lachaise. Many modern sculptors have no doubt displayed greater technical accomplishment than is here indicated; but has any one among them risen to a sublimer height of passionate pity for the mysterious destinies of humanity? Into the great black chasm of the granite sepulchre over which is writ large in awful simplicity, "Aux Morts", are being irresistibly drawn the dying: man, woman, youth, and child. Some pass onwards towards the dreadful gulf in agonized regret and rebellion against Fate; some seek with tears and embraces to hold back those who are drawn on, and must no longer, even by Love, be detained; others veil their faces in horror at the immeasurable emptiness that seems at hand. Youth, passionate youth, yearns and implores, or vainly looks back in longing at the frail, shadowy joys of life that are left behind. One woman, all solitary, but undaunted, kneels in prayer and looks Destiny steadfastly in the face. But two figures, a man and a woman, erect and resolute, have entered the dread portal together—she leaning her hand in love and confidence on the man's shoulder. Two naked human bodies, two

naked human souls! The dread portal, the black chasm, eternity itself, have no terrors for this man and this woman: for in Death they are not divided. In infinite bliss, as in infinite woe, they will be together: for them no flickering out of hope, no anguish of farewell, no numbness of despair. Our tears are not for them, to whom the blackness is already radiant with light, to whom already joy ineffable has come. Surely for such as these, these above all, were the words written: "O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy Victory?"

XI

THE SUBLIME IN ART

Photo. Brogi.

RAPHAEL—"LA DISPUTA DEL SACRAMENTO."

The Vatican, Rome.

THE SUBLIME IN ART

"A still small voice."

The sublime in art has been, and may still be, reached in many ways. Associated in the imagination of the many with strangeness and extreme antiquity, with bulk, vastness, terror, with subjects in themselves sublime, but for the most part incapable of complete expression in plastic shape, it may be contained in, it may be evoked from, all these elements; but it is assuredly not one with any of them. And in things small and lowly of outward aspect it may lie hidden, immeasurable in grandeur, as in things of a more obvious greatness, of spirit not less than proportion—it may show manifest to the eyes of all. Assuredly the "great and strong wind that rent the mountains and brake in pieces the rocks" is terrifying, is Sublime in its resistless force; assuredly the "earthquake", the "fire" are more awful still in their indomitable energy that man is powerless to quell or to fathom. But more awe-inspiring still, in that it can be defined by neither time nor space, and with nothing else in Man or Nature can be paralleled, is the "still small voice" that genius, intensified by human emotion at its highest, can hear, all-pervading, even in its smallness, all-invading as the sea; and, hearing, can translate into vision and mould into art. The Sublime in Art is the power to suggest, to evoke round the thing represented luminous circles, that grow vaster and vaster still as they encircle each other, more palely, more

vaguely, more mysteriously luminous as they spread. It is the power to lay bare the canopy of Heaven above the head of the gazer or the abysses of Hell beneath his feet; it is the power to suggest, to evoke, from the thing presented, the whole train of thought, the whole phase of emotion that enlarges and completes, making of it, whether it be an embodied vision of tremendous majesty or but the simple counterfeit of the humblest and lowliest of human beings, a reflection of the whole world, an integral part of which it is. If the genius of the artist be but comprehensive, penetrating enough; if the power to imagine, to divine, to illumine the hidden depths be his, the gift to hear the still small voice and to interpret its whisper that moves the stars in their courses and draws forth the soul of man from its envelope of dull clay; then it matters little in what form, in what phase of art, in what type of subject this genius, this power to evoke and to reveal, shows itself. We shall find the Sublime not only in the work of the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Byzantines, the Gothic sculptors of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the great Italian, Flemish, and German masters of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, but in the scriptural art and the portraiture of a Rembrandt; in the landscapes of a Claude Lorrain, a Ruysdael, a Turner, a Crome; nay, on occasion, in those of a Rousseau, a Corot, a Millet, a Courbet; in the finest portraiture, too, of a Watts, in the earliest inspirations of a Rossetti, in the few happy moments of a Holman Hunt.

The sublimity of Egyptian architecture and sculpture, the suggestion of eternity even in its defaced statues and ruined temples, is so obvious

that to dwell upon it appears unnecessary. The "Sphinx" is sublime not only on account of its size, its antiquity, its solitude, but by reason of that element of mystery unfathomable that for all time is in it. The gigantic temples of Thebes and Luxor, the colossal images of Memnon, the great official effigies of Rameses II. are not more sublime than the humble "Scribe" of the Louvre, face to face with whom we seem to see the whole limitless past of Egypt unroll itself. And all these things in their power to move do not reach the portrait-statue of Rameses II. in the cold, tomb-like, deserted museum of Turin. This, in its eternal youth and warmth, and yet its disdainful aloofness, so strangely draws and holds the onlooker that a little more and he would sink a worshipper to the feet of this man, whom art has made immortal and the equal of the gods. The majesty of the Greek divinities is cold, awful in its serenity, that no cry of mortal, no invocation, no appeal from the hidden depths can ruffle, a serenity that Goethe defines with an insight so wonderful in the "Song of the Fates" murmured by Iphigenia, the priestess, in her solitude at Tauris. See the "Apollo", who stands the embodiment of cold command, of resistless majesty, the centre of one of the pediments that crown the temple of Zeus at Olympia. See the "Virgin Goddess" of Pheidias even in the feeble echoes of its sublimity that are given in the small and miserable versions which have survived. See the "Pallas" of Velletri in the Louvre, the "Apollo Musagetes" of Munich; the magnificently scornful, eternally blooming "Apollo" of Cassel, ascribed to Myron; the "Zeus" (a reflection of that of Pheidias) on the coins of Elis, the radiant beauty synthetized on the

coins of Syracuse. All the vastness and splendour of Rome, with its Colosseum, its temples, its baths, its basilicas, its gigantic statues of emperors, who "assume the god, affect to nod, and seem to shake the spheres", is not sublimity; it is power, magnificence, world-domination; and these are very different things.

But when intensity of faith, belief, too, in the overwhelming import of dogma, have renewed the decrepit Imperial art and sent molten fire coursing through the apparent rigidity and formality of Byzantine carving and painting, then in the finest productions of this art renewed a sublimity is reached as awe-inspiring as anything that the preceding or succeeding ages have to show of mysticism. It is not only in Byzantine art proper, but in Early Christian or pre-Byzantine—and then later in Carolingian—that this sublimity sheds its influence. Take as an instance the world-famous ivory in the British Museum, "The Archangel Michael crowned, and holding orb and sceptre". Take, as another, the small ivory relief with the Baptism of Christ on the cover of a missal, once in the Treasury of Bamberg Cathedral, now in the Royal Library of Munich. It is an event in the life of the world that we have before us. From the feet of the majestic Christ, whom St. John, a figure of rugged grandeur, reverently baptizes, the waters have, wave upon wave, surged back in awe. Above, the angels make a great and goodly choir, loud in rejoicing, the sun and moon (ever present in Byzantine and Western art) look on at this great wonder, and, highest of all, from the clouds the Hand of the Father of Christ, the Holy Ghost, descends. The greatest renderings of the subject by the Italians of

the Quattrocento appear trivial in comparison with this. An ivory triptych in the Louvre, of Byzantine origin—the "Triptique Harbaville"—gives on a small scale a representation of Christ, an imperial figure, severe and menacing of aspect that for awe-inspiring majesty it would be impossible to surpass. Perhaps the sublimity of Christian art reaches its highest point in the first half of the thirteenth century, with the great sculptures which adorn the cathedrals of Chartres, Rheims, Paris, Amiens, Bourges, and Rouen, in France, and in Germany the great churches of Bamberg, Strasburg, Naumburg, Wechselburg, and Freiberg-in-Saxony. The so-called "Beau Christ" of Amiens Cathedral is in its simplicity one of the most sublime conceptions not of Gothic only but of all art; yet worthy to stand as equals by its side are the majestic effigies of Chartres, the "Visitation" of Rheims, the "Church and Synagogue" of Strasburg, and a whole group of sculptures at Bamberg. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, as we get nearer and nearer to realistic truth, the quality of the sublime element in art changes, and we must seek for it not only or principally in loftiness and unapproachable dignity, but above all in intensity of truth and pathos. Thus Giotto himself, the most astonishing creative genius of the fourteenth century, replaces hieratic majesty by something loftier still, yet warmer and nearer to earth. It is human dignity, human character and pathos that chiefly appeal to us in his two greatest inventions, "The Death of St. Francis" and "The Translation of St. John the Evangelist", both of them in the Church of Santa Croce at Florence. Higher still he rises in a single figure, the Sublime presentment of

Faith, in the Arena Chapel at Padua; for here, concentrated in this figure as a centre—in this personification of a sacred passion so intense, so piercing in its seeming quiescence as almost to wound—we have the whole of militant Christianity, ardent, unrelenting, as resolute and fearless in attack as steadfast in defence. Greek art has, surely, nothing more sublime, more moving, than the simple bas-reliefs (conceived, it is believed, by Giotto, but carried out by Andrea Pisano) which adorn the lowest section of the Campanile at Florence. Passing north again, for a moment, we find, brought to achievement about 1400, the famous "Puits de Moise" of the Chartreuse of Dijon, by the Franco-Dutch master Claus Sluter, who here, in the "Moses" and the companion statues of Prophets, shows himself the precursor, not only of the Van Eycks, who were more or less his fellow-countrymen, but of Donatello, and even of Michelangelo. No better proof that sublimity does not depend mainly on importance of dimensions or hardihood of execution could be desired than that finest of all fifteenth-century missals, the "Très-Riches Heures de Jean, duc de Berry", by Pol de Limbourg and his brothers, now in the Musée Condé at Chantilly. We should seek in vain in Northern art for a conception more astonishing in power than that of the Lucifer tortured and torturing; that monstrous Satanic figure, grey with the greyness of eternal night, which, bound like some St. Lawrence to a colossal, ever-ardent gridiron, in each huge, laboured gasp of agony vomits forth, innumerable as locusts, the souls of the damned, which yet escape not, but in the next breath are drawn back into the horrid gulf. But loftier still, and as a whole unsurpassed in

majesty combined with humble reverent truth by any work created during the fifteenth century, whether north or south of the Alps, is "The Adoration of the Lamb" (Plate XVIII.), by the two Van Eycks, but the invention, as can hardly be doubted, of the elder brother, Hubert. Yet that incomparable but unimaginative realist, Jan, his younger brother, had no doubt a preponderant share in the execution of many portions. Of some passages in this truly inspired work I have spoken already; of its true meaning, as a whole, I shall speak later on.

A "*Miles Christi*", too, is the reverent yet strenuous "St. George" of Donatello, a valiant, trustful, Christian knight, as ready to dare and do as to suffer and submit. Nothing in the life-work of this great master attains a higher level of sublimity than the comparatively small bas-relief, "Christ's Charge to Peter", which is perhaps the greatest treasure of our own Victoria and Albert Museum at South Kensington. Of the Quattrocentist painters of Italy, but few even of the greatest could pretend to or indeed be sought for this particular quality, which south of the Alps goes as a rule with an art either more primitive or more mature. Andrea del Castagno has a rugged grandeur, a dominating fierceness of realism, which rises almost to the sublime; Piero della Francesca a monumental calm, a lofty detachment, a power of generalization that is truly sublimity of its kind. His "Resurrection of Christ", in the Municipal Gallery at Borgo San Sepolcro, is on a level with the very highest that Italian art has produced. And Mantegna, harsh and tender, severe with a more than Roman severity, and yet of a mysticism in devotion as intense as that of any contemporary master, maintains the beholder

in realms where the spirit droops and can hardly follow. The sublimity of Michelangelo himself is equalled in a " Sibyl and Prophet " of very moderate dimensions, formerly in the collection of the Duke of Buccleuch; the " Infant Christ, as Ruler of the World ", of the Mond collection, stands apart in the quiet intensity with which it expresses worship on the one hand and, on the other, the irradiation of the universe by Divine love. The " Madonnas " of the Poldi-Pezzoli Museum at Milan and the gallery at Bergamo express, as by hardly any other master they have been expressed, the sublime devotion, the tragic apprehension, of maternal love that is all human and yet in its immensity Divine. Face to face with his " Adoration of the Magi " (formerly in the Ashburton collection), we experience the feeling of religious awe, almost of terror, that possessed the Wise Men of the East when, though royal still in splendour and in gravity, they knelt subdued and prostrate in worship at the feet of the Divine Babe. Signorelli, whose art lacks this curious element of reserve, of Christian mysticism, reaches sublimity in a fashion wholly different. Of the exuberant dynamic force, the overpowering grandeur shown in the world-famous frescoes of Orvieto, through which seems to blow a whirlwind of genius, uncontrollable, I need not speak; those who know art at all must know *them*. But he is on a higher level still, and in an exceptional phase, in the " Pan, the God of Music, listening to the Voices of Nature ", which is one of the great treasures of the Kaiser-Friedrich Museum of Berlin and one of the supreme inspirations of Italian art. In the hushed quiet of this moment the god himself listens; symbolized by muted harmony is heard, far

off, the music of the spheres; we divine, in solemn motion, the great silent wheels that move the world.

From the very first — and unswervingly — the world has recognized in art three great climaxes of the sublime: the Egyptian art, which stands for eternity, for man in brotherhood with the gods; the Greek, which stands for serenest beauty, now suave and now austere; the art of the Renaissance, which stands for humanity in intensest passion, in fullest splendour, in most developed individuality, in most tremendous fluctuation between the heights and the depths. We have seen how true sublimity, though it cannot be held to be wholly independent of magnitude, of exterior majesty, or of natural grandeur in the subject or the motive treated, is by no means one with any or all of these things; how the "still small voice" informing the painting, the sculpture, or the work of art,—unimportant, it may be, as to its mere outward proportions,—may lift and magnify it until it becomes the equal in significance of the vastest temple, the most colossal and overwhelming statue, the cycle of paintings the most sublime in motive and intention. In the great masters of the Renaissance at its climax the world has found and cherished the loftiest examples, and the most easily recognizable, of sublimity. And this is legitimately reached, not by a suppression or elimination of realistic truth, but by a broad and sane generalization from the greater realism—already half-way on the road that leads towards the ideal—to that ideal itself, which raises its head so fearlessly to the skies just because it rests on a solid and unalterable basis of truth. When the earlier Renaissance, culminating in the second half of the fifteenth century, attained to heights Sublime, it

was not so much by an idealization as by an intensification of the real. Thus Donatello, in his virile "St. George", in his austere "Zuccone" ("The Bald Pate") of the Campanile, in his tragic "Christ expiring on the Cross" of the Santo at Padua, in his "St. John the Baptist" of the Frari, and that other and greater "St. John" of the Siena Cathedral—figures, these last, in which the human individuality, the human passion, is at a point of intensity such that it communicates itself, as a thing hardly to be borne, to the beholder. Nearer to the ideal, as the full Renaissance and the succeeding ages have understood it, is already the mighty Florentine's "Gattamelata", that great equestrian statue of bronze which rises in front of the Santo at Padua, standing much less for the successful condottiere whom it is supposed to represent than for command unquestioned, domination implacable, and victory sure of itself. That other great equestrian statue of the earlier Renaissance, the "Colleoni" of Verrocchio, which stands out so bravely against the sky in the little piazza before the Church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo at Venice, though in many respects an advance even upon the "Gattamelata", and a creation of unique force and vitality, is less near to the achieved Renaissance in this, that its sublimity is the outcome not of an exalted and idealized, but of a deepened and intensified individuality.

The sublimity of a Leonardo da Vinci is in its serenity more nearly akin to that of the Greeks. Like theirs, it is a synthesis based upon the closest and most searching observation of Nature, in her outer vesture of loveliness, as in the mystery of her inmost workings. It is to be seen not only in a world-famous creation such as is the "Cenacolo",

but in every drawing of flexible youth in rhythmic movement, in every head of man or woman, at the root of which is the very principle of life—in every tree, in every plant, in every flower. There are those who, not without a certain cynicism, choose to see in the " Mona Lisa " of the Louvre but the finished presentment of womanhood, with all its subtlest and most alluring graces. I still prefer to recognize in it the reflection, whether conscious or unconscious, of Leonardo's own soul, serene yet unfathomable in mystery, all-penetrating in its unrelaxed interrogation of man and the world, yet yielding up nothing of its own secret. Michelangelo's art is the utmost expression of the sublime as the modern world conceives of it. Not radiant in unalterable serenity like that of the Greeks at its zenith, but agitated as the soul of the Titan who wars unceasingly and despairingly against Jove; the embodiment of a vision as vast and terrible as has been vouchsafed to any son of earth; the outcome of a woe unutterable as that of the Hebrew prophets, to whom he has lent a majesty so awful that the beholder may not unshrinking face it.

What need is there to speak here of inventions which are for ever graven in the heart and soul of man; of the " Creation of Man " and the " Creation of Woman ", the " Jeremiah ", the " Isaiah ", the " Daniel ", the Delphic, the Libyan, the Cumæan Sibyl?—integral parts, all of them, of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, which must count as the mightiest creation of the Renaissance, perhaps as the mightiest that the brain and the hand of man have realized. To define the sublimity of the gentler Raphael, of him whose artistic personality realized the platonic ideal—that combination in perfect balance of the

masculine and feminine elements—is much more difficult. His resistless suavity, the beautiful harmony of his life-work as a whole, not so much overwhelms as gently compels and subjugates him who comes into contact with it. Instances of the sublimity that terrifies and overawes it would not be easy to point to; instances of the sublimity that sheds a mild yet all-penetrating effulgence are more numerous; though of that absolute unity, that impression of conception and realization one and indivisible, without which there is no attainment of the very highest, some of the most famous performances of the Urbinate give no sufficient proof. I should apply the epithet sublime to the "Disputa del Sacramento" (Plate XI.) rather than to that in many respects more wonderful and perfect achievement, "The School of Athens". I should refuse it to that most popular and admired of the world's pictures, the "Madonna di San Sisto" (Plate IV.) of Dresden, for the reason that, though there are in it brought together elements of the highest artistic and spiritual perfection, these are not in such intimate as well as outward coherence with one another as to suggest the sublime vision realized and perpetuated in its essentials by the master-hand. The highest conceptions of Raphael are, on the one hand, such radiant embodiments of the impalpable as the "Poetry" and "Theology" in the ceiling of the Stanza della Segnatura at the Vatican; on the other, the greatest of the Cartoons: the "Miraculous Draught of Fishes", "Paul preaching at Athens", and "Christ's Charge to Peter". Here is a simplicity that is the outcome of supreme art, here is an all-enveloping tenderness that I had almost called divine. The suavity of Raphael is in these creations

indeed resistless, because there vibrates through it the "still small voice". The mysterious rhythm and supreme harmony of Leonardo, the crushing majesty of Michelangelo, are hardly greater.

The Cinquecento art of Venice, though it did not, even when treating the loftiest themes, leave Mother Earth, or seek to embody its conceptions in forms superhuman and symbolic, attained to sublimity in its own way—that is, by an intensification of the human element, upon which our conception of the Divine is based. Giovanni Bellini, in the last painting from his brush that Venice has to show—the "St. Christopher, St. Jerome and St. Augustine" in the little Church of S. Giovanni Crisostomo—is sublime in the warmth and splendour of his art, more beautiful at the moment of sunset and imminent disappearance than ever before; sublime in his rendering of human beauty and tenderness that the glory of unquestioning faith enwraps and transfigures, leaving it, nevertheless, a thing of earth. Titian, whose art in its youth was one of sensuous poetry and spiritualized voluptuousness, in its meridian one of earthly grandeur and material magnificence, rose in the great and prolonged period of his old age to heights that he had never before reached, or, indeed, attempted to scale. No presentment of a human being by an artist of the Renaissance equals in sublimity his equestrian "Portrait of Charles V. at the Battle of Mühlberg" (Madrid), evocation of the greatness and the solitude of the mighty ruler, by the side of which all the marvels of Velazquez in the gallery of the Prado pale, and seem but so much splendid prose. Does any portrait of the sixteenth century reveal depths of disenchantment and resignation in so touching and, withal, so majestic

a fashion as "The Man with a Palm Branch" (Dresden Gallery)? Higher still does the aged master soar, and yet more poignantly human does he become, in the two greatest works of that last period, which is one of loftiest, saddest dream and highest mastery—the "Ecce Homo" of Munich and "Pietà" in the Accademia delle Belle Arti of Venice. In this last, with materials the most ordinary, with no supernatural machinery, with no vastness of horizon, he reaches a climax of spiritual power beyond which there is nothing that man can compass. Tintoretto is often more imaginative; he whirls the beholder away into realms that are his very own; those who gaze must renounce intellectual equality—must, for the nonce, become his slave, and do his bidding. He, too, is sublime, in his own peculiar fashion, which is scenic rather than of the higher spirituality. The appeal is truly made to the imagination, yet rarely reaches those inner chambers of the soul that Titian in his old age touches. It is overwhelming, yet—as the troubled vision is in comparison with the revelation of things truly and deeply human—more potent, more terrible than enduring. Such masterpieces as "The Worship of the Golden Calf" (Madonna del Orto), "The Crucifixion" (S. Cassiano), "Christ before Pilate" (Scuola S. Rocco), "The Marriage of Cana" (S. Maria della Salute), "The Miracle of St. Mark" (Accademia), cannot be usefully analysed, cannot be judged in cold blood; they leave us, somewhat as the flash of lightning does, awe-stricken, yet, when we are outside the circle of influence, less deeply and permanently moved than we believed ourselves to be. Sublime, without qualification, are some of his portraits of aged men.

Moving and terrible are they in the majesty that comes to the human being who has been mighty in thought or mighty in action, as the moment nears when the dark portals are in view, and already throw half open their awful gates. And of all these, perhaps the most sublime, the most terrible, is the rough portrait of the master by himself in the Louvre. He faces the spectator with eyes dazzled by daylight and material things, with the look of the man before whom has passed this fitfully illumined, unending panorama of visions, neither wholly of heaven nor wholly of earth, but of a world created by himself and filled with strange beings whom his magic power has bidden come forth and people it.

The seventeenth century is the age of some of the greatest masters of the brush that the world has seen. What need of reminder that these are Rembrandt, Van Dyck, Frans Hals, Velazquez—Velazquez towering above them all, except perhaps Rubens, in technical achievement—and the supremely accomplished " small masters " of the Netherlands? And yet where, save in the works of Rembrandt, shall we find anything that answers to the sublime as I have endeavoured to define it—anything that is lifted by the " still small voice ", more potent than storm-wind or earthquake or fire, to regions where dwell the great masters of Egypt, Greece, and Italy? Not in Rubens, the sumptuous, the splendid, the exuberant in animal vitality, and (if one dare say so) the superficial; not in Van Dyck, the suave, the aristocratic, the passionate in portraiture, but in sacred art, above all the accomplished rhetorician. Assuredly not in Velazquez, sombre, severe, and disdainful—withdrawn within himself, hidden away,

yet on occasion flashing forth in his incomparable portraits; but in sacred art, after his first period, too often frigid and formal. Rembrandt, in the overpowering element of humanity that is within him, in the power that he has to recast and re-create the great scenes of the world-tragedy, bringing them again to the level of the lowliest and laying bare for eyes to see and soul to penetrate the essential meaning that is in them—Rembrandt is perhaps the loftiest of modern creative artists. None has shown as he has the sublime beauty that there is—apart from the question of youth or age, beauty or ugliness —in the sentient human being, to whom through the whirl and the tempest of life the "still small voice" is audible; or the element of terror and despair that magnifies to grandeur the counterfeit of him who, deafened and defeated by the storm and the horror, hears no longer. Transfigured to a beauty with which even the fairest may not vie are these aged women, so sorrow-worn yet uncomplaining in their resignation, so confidently expectant of the moment of release and that which is beyond it. The whole epic of human life is in the unbroken succession of portraits of the master by himself, from youth to old age. No Prophet of Michelangelo or Raphael is greater, more inspired than the rough-hewn, homely "St. Matthew listening to the Voice of the Angel" (Louvre). Though powerless to evoke before our eyes a Christ awful and superhuman in majesty, as those created by Byzantine and then by Gothic and then by Italian art, he has conceived a Christ the Man of Sorrows, the brother, the infinitely pitiful, who is nearer to the hearts of men. See the mild, all-penetrating effulgence, the atmosphere of all-embracing love,

that emanates from Him in the " Christ and the Disciples at Emmaus " (Louvre); the brotherly tenderness that enfolds, as in a vesture, the whole sombre scene in " The Good Samaritan " (Louvre); or the radiance of Divine light that bursts forth in that most famous of all Rembrandt's etchings, the marvellous " Christ healing the Sick ". Most beautiful, most consoling of all, is that final version of " The Prodigal Son " (Hermitage), which is, perhaps, the master's last picture and is assuredly his last great creation. Here, in the paternal love, ineffable in healing mildness, that goes out to the weary prodigal as he kneels, clasping his father's knees in supplication, is surely a reflection of the Divine love, pity, and pardon as the master has conceived of it, not here alone, but throughout his life-work. Here is pictured the moment of peace after storm—of rest and sleep confiding as that of the tired child; here is pictured, as never before or since in art, the paternal wrath at transgression melted into dew—mercy and forgiveness, without stint or limit, to the sinner.

XII

GREAT PAGEANTS IN ART

By Gracious Permission of H.M. the King.

A. MANTEGNA—"THE TRIUMPH OF JULIUS CÆSAR."

Hampton Court.

GREAT PAGEANTS IN ART

One whole section of this subject, and that among the most important, it is necessary on the present occasion to pass over. I cannot include in these short notes the great sculptured and painted decorations of Egypt, dealing in low relief with pageants of peace and war, of victory and domination, of death and apotheosis. Nor is it possible to speak here of the austere and terrible majesty of the Assyrian Kings or the ceremonial pomp with which they waged war on man and beast, or in hieratic rigidity received homage. All this and more must be passed over, so that we may come quickly to the greatest, the most beautiful Pageant in Art that the world has to show—the frieze of the Panathenaic Procession, by Pheidias and his pupils, which once adorned the cella of the Parthenon. To describe this, one of the world's masterpieces, is happily not necessary. It is our privilege, when we will, to approach the marbles of Athena's great temple, and in awe, but also in gladness, to contemplate their imperishable beauties, feeling once more restored to us as we gaze that serenity which is of the essence of the Greek majesty. The great procession in honour of the tutelary divinity of Athens had been instituted by her foster-child, Erichthonios, and had grown, in elaboration as in beauty, from age to age. A magnificent peplos woven and embroidered by chosen maidens and women was in every third year with great pomp and rejoicing offered to the goddess. The procession representative not only of all that was best and

noblest in Athens, but of the whole city, men and women, young and old, wound its way through the main streets of Athens to the temple of Athena Polias, where the peplos was solemnly handed over to the priests, and the festival crowned and brought to a close with a great sacrifice of a hundred oxen and a banquet in which the whole populace of Athens had part. Even as we look upon the frieze now, pale marble unadorned, whereas it was once tinted and relieved on a ground of deep blue, it seems to live and move through the streets. Apart and unseen by the performers are the gods—Zeus and Hera, and (according to the newer view) Athena herself reclining on their seats of gold, as they look down in august detachment from earthly effort on the procession. The flower of Athenian youth, mounted upon splendid steeds, controlled, as they appear now, by their muscular limbs alone, move in rhythmic progress, ardent yet restrained. Others, having leapt into their chariots, move forward in greater pomp and self-consciousness. Then we have the oxen led to sacrifice, lowing and struggling as they move; maidens directed by a choirmaster, some moving to a slow, gentle rhythm, others arresting their march at his bidding; elders of noble mien, halting in consultation; and finally the peplos itself handed over by a youth to the priest of Athena —an incident treated, however, with so little dignity or significance that it has been doubted by some archæologists if this really is the central incident and the climax of the procession. In all the representation there is a greater, a more essential truth than has again been achieved in art, a truth that is ideal just because it is so firmly rooted in the real. It is the whole being of Athens, centre of the world's

culture, that we have here: the daily incidents, the vibrant life of noble youth controlled in passion, the charm of virginal beauty moving to a solemn music, the lofty mien and serene dignity of the elders, the effortless majesty, the radiance of the gods.

In the art of the Middle Ages and the earlier Renaissance the bravest, the most glittering Pageants are those which we find in the presentment of that favourite subject among all, the "Adoration of the Magi". And, as we now know, in conceiving these sacred pageants the painters, the illuminators, were much influenced by the mystery plays, with their wealth of incident, much of it derived from the sacred writings, but much of it also invented. A wonderful scene is that depicted in the "Très-Riches Heures de Jean, duc de Berry", painted by Pol de Limbourg and his brothers before 1416. The three splendid cavalcades of the Kings move along three separate roads, and converge at a point where, naïve and touching in his anachronism, the limner has placed an elaborate Gothic structure of Northern and purely ecclesiastical aspect. The most famous example to be found in the earlier Italian art is perhaps the dazzling, and withal most reverent, "Adoration of the Magi" (Plate III.) of Gentile da Fabriano[1] which shows the cavalcade of the Kings issuing from a walled city, and winding along green, well-wooded paths until it stops at the feet of the Virgin and Child, to whom the mystic Three, crowned and shining radiant as archangels in golden armour, bend in worship. But even this beautiful representation of a subject combining the utmost outward pomp and splendour with the highest degree of intensity in

[1] Now in the Uffizi, in Florence.

mysticism, has many rivals—greater pictures some of them, though not so typical. A Pageant of unsurpassed magnificence is the cavalcade of the Kings in the great fresco of Benozzo Gozzoli in the Medici (now Riccardi) Palace at Florence. And then we have the famous triptych by Mantegna, formerly at the Uffizi,[1] the five "Adorations" of Botticelli, the vast and elaborate altar-piece of Filippino Lippi, the unique unfinished "Adoration" of Leonardo da Vinci, which with its youthful horsemen, as terrible in beauty as the Angels of the Apocalypse, thrills the beholder who ponders over it in the gallery of the Uffizi. Most characteristic of these Florentine "Adorations" is, however, that of Domenico Ghirlandajo.[2] It is really, as all the world knows, an "Adoration of the Shepherds", and a conception of the simplest, the most touching beauty; but as the rough-hewn, reverent peasants kneel before the Divine Infant there approaches, soon to pass through the triumphal arch of Roman fashion, the glittering joyous cavalcade of the eager Kings which will inevitably overwhelm these humble worshippers. And not by their offerings of gold and jewels alone; for they will worship with a higher understanding, a higher reverence and a deeper conviction.

In the art of the North, too, there are to be found the most splendid sacred pageants, the most splendid ceremonial acts of worship. I must crave forgiveness if, in the course of these remarks, I refer repeatedly to the one among these that most moves and convinces me, to the "Adoration of the Lamb" (Plate XVIII.) of the brothers Van Eyck—the most sublime conception, but also the greatest sacred

[1] Recently again removed from the Pitti to the Uffizi, at Florence.
[2] Transferred some three years ago to the Church of S. Trinità.

pageant of Christian art. See in the centre of a flowering meadow, surrounded by trees that clothe themselves in the loveliness of fresh summer and fruitful autumn, the Altar of the Lamb, guarded by a circle of white-robed worshipping angels; and nearer to the spectator the Fount of Life that issues from it —living water, crystal clear and pure.[1] To the left of the spectator, prophets, philosophers, learned doctors, among those who looked forward to the coming of the Redeemer—some yielding themselves wholly, some half-won, and others doubting, withholding themselves still, though the irresistible influence is upon them. To the right the Apostles kneel, and behind them a great company of popes and bishops and priests. From the gentle slope above descend in slow and solemn gladness through the blooming thickets—on the right a long procession of virgin martyrs and saints holding palm branches, on the left a similar but more splendid procession of martyred popes, cardinals, bishops, and other saints bearing the same emblem of salvation won by victory over earthly torment. But the two processions of the wings are, if one dare say so, more touching still in their direct appeal to the human heart. On the left of the spectator advance the Soldiers of Christ, and following them the Just Judges; on the right are shown the Holy Hermits and then the Holy Pilgrims. Hardly again in art shall we meet with such a conception as this of the Soldiers of Christ, which we owe to the elder and greater master, Hubert van Eyck. Their eyes shining with a steadfast flame of sacred passion, their thoughts led away from all things earthly, they advance slowly towards the centre of light

[1] Cp. page 266.

and life, drawn onwards as by some mystic power. Behind them come the Just Judges (among whom some on insufficient grounds recognize Hubert and Jan themselves), steadfast, reverent, moving, too, in hushed quietude, yet farther, it is clear, as yet, from the Divine influence. And on the other side appear the Hermits, rough in their robes of penitence, their eyes dazzled by the light of day, symbolizing that of eternal life; they are drawn from their caverns by the same irresistible power of Divine Love that leads on and compels the Soldiers of Christ. And in their wake follow two who loved not wisely, St. Mary Magdalene and St. Mary of Egypt, with hair unbound and eyes humbly downcast—by their tears of penitence washed clean of sin. Behind them follow, led by St. Christopher, gentlest and humblest of giants, the Pilgrims, reverent and, like all the rest, moving in solemn quietude, but less wholly wrapt in an atmosphere of Divine Love and detachment from all things earthly than the Hermits, who, by intensity of contemplation, are brought nearer to Christ. The wonder here achieved by Hubert, greatest in imagination among all the painters of Northern Europe, is that the utmost earthly splendour, the utmost simplicity alike bring their tribute of loving worship to the steps of the Altar, the one not less true or less ardent in adoration than the other. Earthly grandeur, royalty of intellect, surrender themselves not less than naïve, unquestioning faith and spiritual humility. And the magnificence of the sacred pageant unrolled before our eyes not only does not detract from, but contributes to express with a still higher intensity, the human beauty, and withal the sublimity, the holiness of the conception.

How vast a gulf divides this masterpiece of

Netherlandish painting from the greatest piece of pure pageantry in art that Italy has produced! I refer to the "Triumph of Julius Cæsar" (Plate XII.), by Mantegna, painted by the master for Isabella d' Este, set up in the Castello di Corte at Mantua, sold by Vincenzo Gonzaga in 1627 to Charles I. of England, and now at Hampton Court.

The "Triumph of Cæsar" was from the beginning planned and carried out as a monumental decoration. The series of nine great temperas on canvas was originally set in a framework of pilaster and cornice, and employed to decorate a chamber used as a theatre, in the palace of Mantua—after them named the Camera dei Trionfi. Even as we see them now in the pitiable state to which the misplaced zeal and total lack of reverence of a succession of restorers have reduced them—hardly a passage in the whole vast scheme of pictorial adornment indicating even to the expert the brushwork of the great Paduan himself—we cannot fail to recognize the decorative magnificence and at the same time the lofty imaginativeness of the conception. Mantegna, though in his worship of antiquity a true child of the Quattrocento, was no pagan in his evocation of the sublime images, the sublime conceptions of the sacred drama. On the contrary, his spirituality rises to an almost painful intensity in such subjects as the "Madonna and Child", the "Adoration of the Magi", the "Christ as Imperator Mundi". But here his whole soul is with Rome, her all-embracing greatness, in which are merged dignity, pomp, luxury, outward display carried to their utmost limits, on the one hand, and austerity, the ruthless virility that is of the essence of domination, on the other. How mean and petty, how

small and local, must even the most impressive pageants of to-day appear, if compared with Mantegna's vision of Julius Cæsar and his legions at the apogee of their triumph achieved and enjoyed! Here are borne along by the legionaries, the priests, the acolytes, the slaves; treasures, the rarest and most exquisite that the world has to show. Not only armour and arms, standards imposing in grandeur and variety of device, sacred vessels and secular, but, as the *spolia opima*, works of art; paintings lifted on high as banners; and sculpture too—the bust of Cybele, tower-crowned, and the statues of Artemis and Aphrodite. The art of the Italian Renaissance, based in many respects on that of Rome and of Greece under Roman rule, is more living and more imaginative than that of its progenetrix. Mantegna, conceiving of her in awe and wonderment, has evoked a Rome more beautiful, more august, greater altogether than the Rome of those sculptors, so remarkable for energy and directness of statement, who fashioned the great reliefs of the Ara Pacis of Augustus,[1] and those of the Triumphal Arch of Beneventum. These striking monumental decorations gave the formal apotheosis of the ruler, the ceremonial dignity, the breadth and simplicity of the Roman ritual. But the great master of the Renaissance gave his wondrous dream of Rome concentrating upon herself, bringing to the feet of her triumphant Cæsar all that the world had to give of riches, of artistic beauty, of majesty in symbolism, all that earthly power at its highest could attain. We are left wondering what height Mantegna might have reached, had he conceived a Triumph of Religion on the scale of this stupendous Triumph of Earthly Domination.

[1] Now in the Museo Nazionale, Rome, the Uffizi, Florence, and elsewhere.

XIII

PLAGIARISM IN ART

Photo. Valentine.

RAPHAEL—"CHRIST'S CHARGE TO PETER."

Victoria and Albert Museum.

PLAGIARISM IN ART

THE accusation of plagiarism levelled against the modern artist, musician, or *littérateur*, is considered the most damning of charges, the most grievous of slanders; and is accordingly met with blustering indignation or shamefaced and all the more furious denial. That one artist, one musician, should have borrowed a motive, central or subsidiary, from a predecessor or contemporary, is considered a circumstance to which a certain disgrace attaches, and which accordingly abases the borrower, lowering his artistic status. There prevails some sort of foolish notion that the artist of the first rank must spring fully equipped and armed from the brain of Jove, in no sense taking his origin from, or owning his debt to, any other mortal. And yet it will be seen that it is just the greatest masters who have been the least concerned, the most unabashed of borrowers. And with full justification, too! Just those have a right to say, "*Je prends mon bien où je le trouve*", who borrowing can give new life to a conception or motive, and transform beauty into higher and stranger beauty, or develop upon the base provided by another the great coherent structure which, unsupported by it, could never have been raised.

It is the smaller men—those who weaken and drain of its life-blood that which they take, not bravely, in the light of day, but surreptitiously—it is they who deserve whipping for their theft, which is no true appropriation, because what they lay hands

upon is not planted so as to germinate, but merely embalmed so as to preserve a semblance of life. With these it is not necessary on the present occasion greatly to concern ourselves. They may steal the precious jewels, they may root up the flowers more precious, more exquisite still; the jewels will become dim on their brows, and the flowers, planted in unfruitful soil, will sicken, droop, and die. The modern idea that Plagiarism is a shameful thing—or rather that to be found out in it is shameful—comes perhaps, from the notion, quite foreign to the living arts of the past, that the first and greatest thing for the creative artist is to be "original", even though this "originality" should be attainable only by kicking over and trampling under foot all the vast accumulation of tradition patiently piled up and welded together by the successive ages and schools. But no; surely the first and, indeed, the whole duty of the creative artist is to be *true*; to give the fullest expression to himself, to the human and artistic emotion which he receives from his surroundings—that is, from Man and from Nature. If through a formula already created by another, and ready to hand, he can best and most truly express himself, then let him take it without fear. For surely, though it be the same, it will be other; the intimate expression of personality will colour it with other hues, and cause it to shoot forth vigorous roots, to blossom anew, and itself to become fruitful.

We can trace these processes more clearly perhaps in music than in fine art. Wagner, the greater genius, springs just as surely from Weber, the lesser, as Leonardo da Vinci does from Verrocchio, or Raphael from Timoteo Viti and Pietro Perugino. Not only does the mighty master of

modern music, so vast in scope that it expresses things which are for all time, issue mainly from the narrower and more German romanticism of Weber, but in his beginnings he scruples not to borrow from his store anything that suits him. Is not the keynote of the early "Faust" overture an introductory phrase of Agathe's great aria in "Der Freischütz"? Is not the "Tannhäuser" march a transformation, by means of very slight changes, of the allegro, with which the same aria winds up? And Wagner does not scorn to borrow from men less great than Weber. The leading motive in the long interview between Hans Sachs and his *protégé* Walther von Stolzing, in the third act of "Die Meistersinger", is almost textually that of the *allegro* in Nicolai's familiar "Merry Wives of Windsor" overture, which preceded the great work by a good many years. And then we have Brahms in the final movement of his First Symphony laying hands boldly and openly—as some would say sacrilegiously—upon the immortal "*Freude schöner Götterfunken*", which is the crown and climax of Beethoven's Choral Symphony. And he does so with such magnificent conviction, with such a going out of his whole soul to it, that it actually becomes his—and the theft of Jove's thunder is forgiven. The most recent instance that we have of the man of genius (whom we may class as of the "*Übermensch*" type) stretching out his hands to take what he wants out of the rich store of the past and the present, is that of Richard Strauss in the "Elektra". Here are many motives—among them some of the most striking—which ring in our ears as old friends. But as Strauss uses them they are created anew, their rhythm becomes bolder and

more irresistible, they flow as molten fire in our veins, they become his, and are fraught with a new significance.

Perhaps no better instances could be given of that justifiable Plagiarism (or more properly borrowing) which is inextricably interwoven with the progress and development of a school than are afforded by the art-history of the Bellini family. Jacopo, the famous father of the still more famous Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, in his two great Sketch-Books—the earlier in the British Museum, the later and more elaborate in the Louvre—recorded many motives, inventions, and *pensieri* of his own, which (almost after the fashion which has throughout the centuries obtained in the schools of the Far East) became in a sense established formulas, to be repeated, developed, and finally transformed by his sons, and not by them alone. On this basis of paternal example did Giovanni Bellini evolve the most moving and human, and withal the most divine, type of the Madonna that the world has known. In Jacopo's Sketch-Book at the British Museum is a design "Christ's Agony in the Garden", which has been appropriated and developed both by Giovanni Bellini and his brother-in-law, Andrea Mantegna—each elaborating and transfiguring the motive or formula invented by Jacopo in accordance with his own genius. Both pictures are now in the National Gallery. Giovanni Bellini, composing with a touching naïveté and awkwardness, has made the scene more actual, more human and probable, enveloping it, too, in the rose and gold of a dawn for the sudden, tragic splendour of which there is hardly a parallel in art. Mantegna makes the same scene, based on the

same formula, loftier and more remote, more symbolical, more evocative of the awful tragedy which is to shake to its foundations, and then to renew, the world. But when the galaxy of minor Venetian painters, admirable craftsmen, and sincere artists of their kind come to imitate Giovanni Bellini, acknowledged head of the school, and to repeat with variations his later types of the "Madonna and Child", then there is a gradual descent to a lower level, and the formula becomes a frozen one, more and more mechanically repeated, and losing more and more of significance with every merely formal variation. There can, indeed, be exterior embellishment; but there is no true assimilation, no partial recreation through the idiosyncrasy of the artist who repeats. And this is the lower, the less fruitful form of Plagiarism, or borrowing: it is unfortunately inevitable in art when a great central artistic personality attracts around it, and in its following, a host of minor men, who can perceive, and up to a certain point imitate, the outer characteristics, the mannerisms, of genius, but cannot steep themselves in its true essence. The style of Giovanni Bellini is not in the higher and truer sense continued by the Bellinesques, who industriously, and not without reverence, seek to uphold its traditions; it is merely frozen and embalmed. It is the radiant Giorgione and his brother in genius, the young Titian, who are the true heirs of old Giovanni, the quintessence of whose mature art inspires their beginnings, so soon to be developed and transformed by the great current of individual passion and expression that is the achieved Renaissance, of which they themselves are the living fires.

Again, take as an example the world's greatest

genius in art—Leonardo da Vinci. He draws his life-blood in the first instance from Andrea del Verrocchio, a great master, though hardly a great genius—and the one among the Florentines of the Quattrocento who combines those opposed yet equally characteristic Tuscan qualities of sardonic grimness and an unearthly suavity. But for that disquieting, quasi-archaic serenity of his Madonnas and his fair Florentine dames, but for that bitter-sweetness of his which at once attracts and repels, should we ever have had the " Mona Lisa " of Leonardo, with that unfathomable smile which is less that of the conscious enchantress whose eyes rain influence than the expression of Leonardo's own soul face to face with the inner secrets of the world, divined by his piercing eyes alone? Michelangelo scrupled not to borrow from the Sienese Quattrocento sculptor, Jacopo della Quercia, and borrowing immeasurably developed, and wholly by his mighty spirit transformed. True, that very early work, his little statue of S. Petronio, on the Arca (tomb) of S. Domenico, in the church of that name at Bologna, is little more than a copy of the similar figure by the elder sculptor which is in the lunette above the central portal of S. Petronio. But taking, much later, from that portal, among other things, the design of the marble relief with the Creation of Eve, by Quercia, he evolves from it, with but little alteration in the formal conception, one of the most sublime creations of the Ceiling that makes world-famous the Sistine Chapel. The genius of Raphael was, however, far more assimilative. Urbino, Perugia, Florence fed its roots, and, diverse as were these nourishing springs, they were all absorbed by its dominating strength directed, controlled, by

a rhythm of unerring balance and unfailing beauty. It is in his Perugian and Peruginesque phase that he is least admirable; and here—I say it with bated breath—though he immeasurably improves, he does not truly embellish or transfigure what he borrows. In the "Crucifixion"[1] of the Mond collection, in the "Coronation of the Virgin" of the Vatican, in the "Sposalizio" of the Brera, the radiant pupil already enters upon a phase of technical development beyond that reached by his master at his apogee. And yet he is in this phase outside his theme, imperfectly in touch with its higher and more spiritual side; while Perugino, expressing above all himself, is at its very heart. The atmosphere of Divine calm and utter peace that enwraps "The Vision of St. Bernard" (Munich), the "Crucified Christ between St. John the Evangelist and St. Mary Magdalene" (Convent of the Pazzi, Florence), and the Triptych from the Certosa (National Gallery) is not in these things. It is only after renewed contact with his mother-earth—Urbino—and with the wonders of teeming Florence, that Raphael's wings are set free, and he soars to altitudes undreamt of by those from whom in his days of boyhood and youth he drew nourishment. Even then, in his ultimate phase of achieved greatness, he does not hesitate to appropriate any figure or motive that seems to fit in with his general conception. He is nowhere at such sublime altitudes as in the "Cartoons" (Victoria and Albert Museum), even though the hand elaborating these great conceptions is rarely his. And yet throughout we feel the influence of the Brancacci Chapel—of Masaccio and Filippino Lippi. The simple yet

[1] Now in the National Gallery.

tremendously impressive composition, the dignified quietude, the grand spacing of "Christ's Charge to Peter" (Plate XIII.), above all, recall Masaccio; while in the "Paul preaching at Athens" the great figure of the Apostle, which is not surpassed in majesty and passion in the whole life-work of the Urbinate, is taken with but little alteration from the "St. Paul conversing with St. Peter in Prison", by Filippino, in the Brancacci Chapel. The "Spasimo di Sicilia" (or "Calvary") of the Prado at Madrid—a work the invention of which belongs to the period of Raphael's full maturity, though again his own brush is hardly traceable in it—is based, as regards the chief elements of the design, on the great "Calvary" print of Martin Schöngauer, and the later woodcut of the same subject in Albrecht Dürer's "Great Passion". Once—and that, strange to say, at the very climax of his achievement—Raphael has borrowed with more audacity than success "The Infant Christ" in one of his great altar-pieces. The "Madonna di Foligno" (*circa* 1514) is a very close adaptation, nay almost a copy of the Bambino in Michelangelo's early "Holy Family", the *tondo* of the Uffizi. And the figure, thus audaciously appropriated, becomes mannered and loses half its significance. This is, however, an exception, and one for which we will not attempt to account. It is just the artist of supreme rank who justifies his unspoken claim to be above the law of mine and thine, a law so salutary when ordinary mortals only are concerned. To the highest genius, but to it alone, nothing may be denied—only, so long, however, as the result really does justify the means. But woe to the lesser men who, like the greedy little birds, carry off more than they can swallow or digest.

For them is reproof and the ferule of correction; while for those whose audacity is crowned with success, whose borrowing is but for the more complete and inspired realization of the embryonic conception—and thus for the good of the world—there are the laurel-wreath and the palm of victory.

XIV

VANDALISM IN ART

N. POUSSIN—"L'HIVER OU LE DÉLUGE."

The Louvre, Paris.

VANDALISM IN ART

The lovers of great art in all civilized countries must have been dismayed when it was announced that Nicholas Poussin's "Le Déluge" (Plate XIV.)—or "L'Hiver", as it is sometimes called—in the Louvre had been slashed to pieces, and probably irretrievably ruined, by some miserable creature, in order to satisfy a private spite, or, it may be, to draw down upon himself the attention which he could not otherwise command. With the facts of this particular case we are not now concerned, nor need we discuss here the exact pecuniary value of the picture, which is recognized as a representative canvas by one of France's greatest and most representative painters. At the same time, when it is remembered that world-famous masterpieces of all schools and periods are brought together in the Louvre, and that upon any of these this miserable criminal might have spent his rage, a feeling of thanksgiving must have accompanied and somewhat mitigated that of terror and helplessness in the presence of a danger against which, at the best, only partial and insufficient precautions can be taken. We think at once of the Leonardos, the Titians, the Correggios, the Rembrandts, the Rubenses, and Van Dycks; and then with hardly less anxiety of the earlier masters of the Italian and Netherlandish schools. We think of the Watteaus, the Fragonards, the Chardins, in the Salle Lacaze and the eighteenth-century galleries. What if the evil-doer's footsteps had been guided to the "Apollo

and Marsyas" of Perugino, the "Mona Lisa", the "Vierge aux Rochers", or the "Lucrezia Crivelli" of Leonardo; to the "Baldassare Castiglione" of Raphael, or the "Charity" of Andrea del Sarto; to the "Entombment", the "Homme au Gant", the "Vierge au Lapin" of Titian, or the "Last Judgment" of Tintoretto; to the "Pilgrims at Emmaus" of Rembrandt, the "Portrait of Descartes" by Frans Hals—to the priceless primitive Netherlandish and later Dutch pictures, or to that enchanting phantasy, "L'Embarquement pour l'Ile de Cythère", of Watteau? "Le Déluge" belongs to the latest, in many respects the finest, period of Poussin's art, when his colour had lost some of its acidity and its trenchant sharpness of contrast, and the antique severity of his conceptions showed in all their solemn grandeur. The other canvases of this great series, which was commissioned by the Duc de Richelieu of Poussin in 1660, and completed only in 1664—a year before his death—are "Le Printemps, ou Le Paradis Terrestre", "L'Été, ou Ruth et Booz", and "L'Automne, ou La Grappe de la Terre Promise".

"L'Hiver" is—or must we sorrowfully say "was"?—remarkable not only for its naïveté and loftiness of imaginative conception, but as proving, more clearly than does any other Poussin, that upon the art of the majestic seventeenth-century master is based that, not less majestic and aspiring, of the modern master, Puvis de Chavannes. These figures in the "Déluge" of Poussin are obviously the prototypes of many of his. The ravages of time we deplore, yet must sighing accept; the all-devouring rage of fire we may not, with all our precautions, wholly and for ever avert. But the

stupid iconoclastic rage of the reformer, the still more hideous nihilistic rage of the destroyer, to whom all greatness and beauty are an insult—these things are surely among the vilest and most irreparable crimes that the individual, or body of individuals, can commit against the human race. For to the whole civilized world—not to the past only, or the present, but to the future—belong, surely, the grandest and most significant achievements of art that the successive ages have brought forth. To slay them, to tear out the heart of their beauty and greatness, is worse even—if we may dare to say so—than to slay the human body, which may, and in the common order of things must, perish, and be replaced. Thus is destroyed, indeed, and obliterated the outcome, the embodiment of man's immortal part, his genius, his soul.

Passing over instances of destruction on a large scale, caused by popular fury, by war or revolution, we find only too many instances of the deliberate mutilation of great works of art, if not of that absolute slaying and destruction which is equivalent to wilful murder, and in its results even more far-reaching and terrible. We need hardly refer to the smashing of the " Portland Vase " at the British Museum by a lunatic. Not many years ago a discharged attendant of the Museo degli Arazzi, at Florence, in a fit of red fury deliberately broke to pieces with a chair the most elaborate archaic Greek vases—the so-called François Vase, dating from about 500 B.C. But this it has been possible, with infinite patience, to restore as nearly as may be to its original condition. Titian had to suffer much at the hands of the vandal, even in his lifetime. His great " Madonna and Child with Six Saints ", now

in the Pinacoteca of the Vatican, has been shorn of all that upper glory of rays (visible still in engravings) which must have afforded so fine a finish to its sumptuous beauty; the monks of the Escurial did not hesitate to cut down, and in essentials to mutilate, his " Last Supper ", painted for their Refectory, but which they found it difficult to fit into the niche for which it had been destined. Correggio has, within the last few years, been exposed to even grosser and more inexcusable outrage. His greatest work, the " Ascension of Christ ", in the dome of S. Giovanni Evangelista (not to be confounded with the Cathedral) at Parma, has so suffered from the brutal ignorance and neglect of the " restorer ", that its very existence is endangered, and it is, for the present, at any rate, lost to the art lover. The famous " Leda and the Swan ", of the same master, now in the Kaiser-Friedrich Museum at Berlin, was cut to pieces by that prurient Puritan, Louis d'Orleans, son of the most unpuritanical Regent of France, and tne head of the Leda was completely destroyed. It was afterwards mended by Charles Coypel, and by him supplied with a new head in the place of Correggio's. In this state it was, in 1755, acquired for Frederick the Great. At the same time, and by the same sacrilegious hand, the " Jupiter and Io " of Correggio was mutilated; the head of Io being cut out and replaced in similar fashion by one painted by Coypel, which, fortunately for posterity, was again (in 1806) replaced by one painted by that most Corregiesque of modern painters, Prud'hon. Luckily this version (like the Leda in the Kaiser-Friedrich Museum) was but an excellent copy of the original now in the Museum of Vienna.

Instances of Vandalism might be multiplied indefinitely, though perhaps in the whole history of art there is to be found none so outrageous as this. Controversy still rages as to whether the "Night Watch" of Rembrandt has or has not been materially cut down; but, at any rate, his once still vaster "Claudius Civilis", now in the State Gallery at Stockholm, has been so mutilated and diminished that the original conception of the master is hardly to be divined. The great "View of Dort" at Dorchester House, probably the finest Cuyp in existence, was at one period cut into two equal halves, which made two distinct pictures. It was the late Mr. Holford who, having luckily obtained possession of both halves, re-united them and restored to the world, practically uninjured, Cuyp's masterpiece. In the same way Watteau's "Enseigne de Gersaint", formerly in the private collection of the German Emperor in the Old Palace of Berlin, was at some time in the eighteenth century cut into two equal halves—an operation which its peculiar form and design unfortunately facilitated. And in this state, alas! this exquisite piece of eighteenth-century genre—unique among Watteau's larger compositions—still remains. One of the most curious acts of vandalism perpetrated in our time is fortunately not irretrievable. Some few years ago there was re-discovered behind the altar in one of the side chapels of the SS. Annunziata in Florence a magnificent and finely-preserved fresco by Andrea del Castagno—one of the rarest among the great Florentines of the Quattrocento and among the painters of that great time the most austere in realism. This, after having been exhibited for a year or two—to the delight of students of this school and period

—has most cynically—the thing seems incredible, but is nevertheless certain—been covered up, and hidden away so completely behind an altar and nondescript altar-piece that it might never have existed. And this has been done simply from motives of local convenience, and so that one insignificant chapel might again be made available for use, in a church which is rich to excess in chapels and altars. Here is a case in which public opinion will assuredly in time make itself felt and compel the restoration to the innumerable lovers of Italian art of Andrea del Castagno's splendidly vigorous work. The hatred and contempt of the world follow all such vandals as these destroyers and "restorers". They are far more criminal than the rude, uncultivated barbarians who sin in ignorance, since they have sinned, and still sin, in full knowledge of the crime against humanity which, in cold blood and after deliberation, they commit. Can no material punishment be devised to scourge into shame and penitence those who are so thick of hide, so impenetrable to the sting of words that the arrows of scorn, the stripes of contempt, will not pierce or move them?

XV

GREAT PAINTERS BY THEMSELVES

Photo. Anderson.

TITIAN—"PORTRAIT OF HIMSELF."

The Prado, Madrid.

GREAT PAINTERS BY THEMSELVES

MICHELANGELO, the only master of supreme rank who painted no portraits, has thus left no reflected image of himself. All the same, his sad, tormented face, as rendered, in singular agreement with each other, by several contemporaries, is one of the most familiar of all in the procession of painters. The portrait in the Painters' Gallery of the Pitti[1] (ascribed, on insufficient grounds, to Giulio Romano), and the fine medal by Michelangelo's ardent admirer, Leone Leoni, are among the most trustworthy presentments of the sublime dreamer. In all the distorted nose appears, the result of the smashing blow delivered by Buonarroti's fellow-student, the sculptor Torrigiano, when they were working together in the chapel of the Carmine. In all the portraits there is the same shadow of an overwhelming world-woe—the same impression of utter isolation and an irremediable pessimism that we derive from the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel and from the Sonnets. The tale of Raphael's suave, unclouded youth, of his suave, unclouded art, is well told in the still beautiful though terribly injured portrait of the Painters' Gallery. "The divine" Sanzio appears again a few years older, but still in the bloom of youth, in his great fresco of the "School of Athens" in the Stanze of the Vatican. Here he stands to the extreme right of the spectator, not with Perugino, as was once assumed, but with Sodoma, whose work in the

[1] Formerly in the Uffizi.

ceiling (all save one fragment saved through the intercession of Raphael himself) was destroyed to make way for that of the new Apelles. Of Raphael in his maturity we have no certain portrait; hardly, indeed, a probable one, unless we choose to accept as such the second figure in a well-known group nominally ascribed to the Urbinate in the Louvre, where it once bore the popular designation, "Raphael et son Maître d'Armes". It is thus the Raphael of the "Sposalizio", and the still youthful creator of the "Scuola d' Atene", that we know; not the Raphael of the "Sistine Madonna", the "Baldassare Castiglione", the "Transfiguration". There is more difficulty than is generally imagined in ascertaining what was the true outward semblance of Del Sarto, even the most generally accepted portraits of the "faultless Andrea" being by no means in agreement with each other. There are grave reasons for disallowing the claims of the likenesses at Panshanger and in the Pitti Gallery, though these are undoubtedly masterpieces from Andrea's own brush. Another type to be found at the Pitti—the realization of a being lofty, vague, impersonal—is more probably that of the great master who lacked only a higher individuality to be supreme. He reappears (if, indeed, it be he) at a much later stage in a fragment of fresco placed in the Painters' Gallery. Of Angelo Bronzino, if we have no autoportrait in manhood, we have yet (as Vasari records) a delightful reminiscence in the "Joseph and his Kindred in Egypt", by Pontormo, which is No. 1131 in the National Gallery. Here Bronzino's master has depicted his youthful assistant in the garb of the Florentine stripling of the period, showing him the one real figure amidst august shadows

at the foot of the monumental flight of steps. I have shown in a previous article that there is no authentic counterfeit of Correggio in existence, and we are left to wonder whether there was or was not correspondence of his physical with his artistic personality. One of the finest of all the portraits in the often-cited, and often-to-be-cited, Painters' Gallery—formerly in the Uffizi, but now in the Pitti—is that of Parmigianino, by himself. He appears here young, refined, ardent, nervous, elegant in mien and costume: just the man to do what he did—that is, to go beyond Correggio in audacious development of what in the next century will be called the *barocco*; to add something of premature decadence, but also of irresistible fascination, to the Italian art of the sixteenth century.

Of Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, the greater sons of a great father, we possess, fortunately, authentic, if hardly sufficient, records in the two profile portraits on the medals executed by Vittore Camelio. And with that of Gentile Bellini there agrees perfectly a singularly fine charcoal drawing in the Print Room of the Berlin Gallery. This shows him in advanced age, sensitive, distrustful, with something of aloofness and shrinking from immediate contact with actuality, which is just what we find in his work. Giovanni Bellini looks dry and severe enough on Camelio's medal—by no means a probable author of the great series of sacred works which, perhaps more than any others of the Quattrocento or Cinquecento, have moved the modern man. The portrait in the Painters' Gallery, which, if not from his own hand, does in all probability represent him, shows a man of pale complexion and uncompromisingly red hair (*zazzera?*); again not the Giovanni Bellini of

our dreams, but a personage the reverse of sympathetic. Of Giorgione there is nothing upon which we can rely with any degree of certainty, or even probability; and this is one of our bitterest disappointments. It is true that, according to Vasari, the "David with the Head of Goliath", of which there is an old copy (by some deemed to be the original) in the Imperial Gallery of Vienna, is Giorgione's portrait by himself. This figure is in type identical with the beautiful Giorgionesque "Shepherd" of Hampton Court, in which we should thus have a reflection of the poet-painter's romantic charm and youthful grace. But Vasari mentions this only as hearsay, and there is unfortunately nothing amounting to confirmation of the supposition. It would be pleasant to think that the painter looked thus, whom the gods envied, since they snatched him away before his genius had attained its highest point, and at the very moment when he was steeped to the lips in art, in music, and in love.

With his close companion and follower it is otherwise. There is no figure more familiar than that of Titian in various stages of advancing years, and then of old age. The structure of the head is grand, the air noble, the bearing dignified, the aspect sympathetic down to the very end of the prolonged life. There are two portraits side by side in the Painters' Gallery of the Pitti; and a far finer likeness (in some minor particulars unfinished) is to be found in the Kaiser-Friedrich Museum at Berlin. Most beautiful of all is the portrait of the aged master, spiritualized so that the soul seems to shine through the world-worn flesh, which is in the Prado Gallery of Madrid (Plate XV.). This is the

Titian to whom we owe those marvels of the last period, the "Christ crowned with Thorns" of the Munich Pinakothek, and the "Pietà" of the Venice Accademia; and also, strange to say, the intensely sensuous, yet intensely pathetic "Nymph and Shepherd" at the Vienna Gallery—Titian's farewell, thus late in his wonderfully prolonged career to earthly life and the passion that is of earth. We see him, too, painted by Paolo Veronese, in the vast "Noces de Cana" of the Louvre—a man of mature years, richly robed, playing on a huge contrabasso. His head appears, moreover, on the bronze door, by Jacopo Sansovino, at the back of the choir of San Marco. El Greco, his pupil in Venice, though his artistic leanings were rather towards Tintoretto and Bassano, has portrayed him in a picture now in the collection of the Earl of Yarborough. Yet we cannot even guess how the young Titian, Giorgione's contemporary, looked when he painted the "Three Ages" (Plate IX.) of Bridgewater House and the "Sacred and Profane Love" of the Borghese Gallery.

The rough yet strangely moving portrait of Tintoretto by himself in the Louvre gives the impression of a man almost frenzied with self-communing, an *halluciné*, to whom inward vision means more than the sight of outward things. This portrait, of little pictorial attractiveness, is a psychical revelation. We see before us, not only in the flesh, but in the spirit, the poet of the brush to whom the world owes "The Procession of the Golden Calf" of the Madonna del Orto, the "Christ Crucified" of San Cassiano, the "White Christ" and the "Great Crucifixion" of the Scuola San Rocco. Lorenzo Lotto, whose art may be likened to an

exquisite music, morbid, outside all rules and boundaries, yet heart-searching and irresistible, is supposed to be represented in a triple portrait at the Imperial Gallery of Vienna; but as to the ascription of this picture to him, I have always, notwithstanding the ingenious arguments advanced in its favour, felt serious doubts. It is difficult to connect this robust and splendidly virile personage with the neurasthenic temperament of the rarely gifted painter who, in his finest portraits, searches out the very heart of his fellow-man's sorrow. Of Palma Giovane there is an appropriately calm and mundane auto-portrait in the Brera Gallery at Milan, in which this prolific painter represents himself seated before an easel on which is an unfinished canvas of markedly Tintorettesque type.

The seventeenth century shows a magnificent array of Painters of the first rank portrayed by Themselves. I will say nothing on the present occasion of Ludovico and Annibale Carracci, nor of Guido Reni, Guercino and Carlo Dolci, whose counterfeits, with many others of the same time and school, the Painters' Gallery holds. All the joy in life and what life gives that we find in Rubens are accentuated in a series of self-portrayals, from youth to the confines of old age. In the portrait-group of the Pitti Gallery—in which he appears with his brother Philip, and the famous savants, Justus Lipsius and Hugo Grotius—Rubens is young and ardent, but already almost bald. In the portrait-group of the Alte Pinakothek at Munich he complacently depicts himself, splendid in the early prime of his manhood, with his first wife, Isabella Brant, who was to him the loving consort, the friend, while her niece, the beautiful Hélène Fourment, who succeeded her,

was the richest jewel in the crown of success and splendour, the adored mistress, the plaything. Then there are the well-known likenesses of the Uffizi and Windsor Castle respectively—the *portraits-types*, these, which we most readily connect with the name and the personality of Rubens. A new phase is entered upon when Hélène Fourment fills the scene and the canvases of the master. The art reaches its highest point of efflorescence, its highest intensity of sensuousness, in this last period, which is dominated not less in its artistic than in its purely human aspect by the second wife. We see the uxorious Rubens in the great portrait-group in the collection of the late Baron Alphonse de Rothschild, proudly and ceremoniously accompanying his sumptuously attired spouse. We see him again, in a much smaller canvas of the Munich Pinakothek, doing the honours of his garden to her, and accompanied, with respect and a somewhat forced assiduity, by one of his sons. We see him, still splendid in exuberance of force and power, in the magnificent family portrait-group placed over his grave in the Church of St. Jacques at Antwerp. But an indefinable yet overpowering impression of sadness is conveyed by the last self-portrait. This is the half-length in the Imperial Gallery of Vienna, painted about a year before his death. Suddenly we note a dying out of the intense vitality, an extinction of the whole being, after a wonderful climax of passionate perfection in the art, coinciding with a St. Martin's summer of passion in the man.

Van Dyck, like Albrecht Dürer, adored his own perfections so long as he was young and comely, so long as the accomplishment and the fascination of his art were supplemented by the attractions of his

supreme elegance and great physical charm. Very numerous are the portraits of this early time, when the painter can scarcely have been more than twenty to twenty-three years old; among these being the canvases in the Academy of Arts at Vienna, in the Hermitage of St. Petersburg, in the collection of the Duke of Grafton, and in the Munich Pinakothek. Moreover, the figure of the nude St. Sebastian in the two Martyrdoms of the Saint in the Alte Pinakothek of Munich is obviously studied from Van Dyck's youthful, supple, well-proportioned body. A little later, and painted under the influence of Titian, is the " Van Dyck as the Shepherd Paris ", of the Wallace Collection, in which the artist, who is but scantily draped, looks rather more robust, and a trifle Flemish already in contour. A good many years later, since it belongs to the English period, yet revealing a man still in the early prime of life, is the " Van Dyck with the Sunflower ", of which one example is in the Duke of Westminster's collection. I know of no portrait to illustrate quite the last time of overwork, feverish unrest, and declining health—the period when Van Dyck was overwhelmed and ultimately destroyed by the ruthless demands of fashion.

XVI

THE WILTON DIPTYCH

ENGLISH SCHOOL, XIV. CENTURY.

The Earl of Pembroke.

ENGLISH SCHOOL, XIV. CENTURY.

The Earl of Pembroke.

THE WILTON DIPTYCH

THE Wilton Diptych is not only one of the greatest art treasures that much-plundered England still holds, it is, as I shall hope to show, unique as an example—and, indeed, the finest extant—of British painting in the latter half of the fourteenth century.[1] And it is not less important as a landmark in English history than as a work of art. Rumour is in the air, alarming reports come to us—little puffs of storm-wind that are forerunners of tempest, heralds of catastrophe. A national treasure such as this is, though an individual may possess it, should be as sacred, as inalienable as a crown-jewel; nay, far more so, since it is a treasure for the loss of which nothing—absolutely nothing—can make amends. It will be said that the Diptych (Plate XVI.) was once a possession of the British Crown, and that by the Royal owner who too lightly let it go no great value could have been attached to it. This would, however, be a poor, a miserable excuse. We who cannot remake history, who cannot renew its landmarks or the works of art which serve to express it, should at least constitute ourselves guardians of what the past has, by a miracle, left behind, to record far more vividly than words could do the artistic achievements of England even at moments when she has been supposed to be dependent to a great extent on the foreigner. It should have been possible at the not very distant time, when the pecuniary value of great works of art

[1] This article appeared in the "Daily Telegraph" of Feb. 17, 1914.

was something like a tenth of what it is just now—and this value is rising day by day, hour by hour—to secure such inestimable possessions as certain exceptional masterpieces of the British and foreign schools, and the historical portraits of Holbein, and this Wilton Diptych.

It should have been possible to place these jewels in England's crown, out of reach of individual ambition, above all, out of reach of the omnivorous millionaire, American or Teutonic, to whom such things—especially things of historical as well as artistic interest—cannot possibly mean what they do to us, and would mean to our descendants. But successive Governments have looked on, indifferent or at the most mildly regretful, deeming, apparently, that their duty to the nation has been sufficiently performed when they have made pretty, vague, hypothetical promises for some day in the distant future when they may think it indispensable to guard a land stripped naked by that time of all treasures that are not immobilized in the public museums. Great orators, great statesmen, much applauded for their sympathetic attitude, have opined that the time *might* come when they *might* think it necessary to take a serious view of the situation. But now it is no longer a question of views, of hypothetical half-promises, of charming speech, of sympathetic attitude and attitudes. Every day we are made sick and dizzy by some such rumour as this which now comes to us, every day we stagger at the news (conveyed invariably too late for efficacious action) that some immortal masterpiece, or some treasure, alike historically and artistically important, is to be uprooted and borne from our shores for ever. The general plea of the Govern-

ment is *non possumus*; the general plea of the National Gallery—I do not say that it is so in this particular case—is ignorance of what is going on, or has gone on.

Twice already I have called attention to the sale to H. C. Frick, of New York, of the famous painting by Holbein, showing Sir Thomas More in his Chancellor's robes and collar of office. Recently there has been sold another Holbein, of wellnigh equal historical importance, if of less transcendent merit as a painting. This is the portrait of Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, painted about 1534, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer. Until quite recently it was at Tyttenhanger Park, the seat of the Earl of Caledon. The Cromwell now makes an admirable pendant to the " Sir Thomas More ", in the collection of the late H. C. Frick.

And all this time, though the supreme authorities have graciously suffered that words of passionate pleading should be poured into their ears, they have looked on, supine, and, as we must assume, indifferent. For such occasions as these the Italian Government is fully armed by law. Dealing lately with the magnificent collection made by the late Signor Crespi of Milan, as a condition precedent to the granting of an authorization for the sale proposed by the executors, they compelled them to hand over to the Brera Gallery a beautiful early " Nativity " by Correggio, obtained by the late Signor Crespi in England. Moreover, they embargoed, and finally purchased for the State, two paintings of great historical importance: a " Battle Scene ", by Domenico Morone, rarest of all the Veronese masters, and the " Entry of Charles VIII. of France into Florence ", by Granacci.

The Wilton Diptych, as for convenience we must continue to call it, is first heard of in the reign of Charles I. It was obtained by Sir James Palmer from Lord or Lady Jennings, and given by him to the art-loving monarch, who owned it, as we know, in 1639, when it was engraved by Wenzel Hollar, with a dedication to him. In the same year Vanderdoort made his great catalogue of Charles's paintings and art treasures. In it we find the Diptych catalogued as "An altar-piece with two shutters, all-over gilded doors, wherein is painted on the one side Richard II., sidelong kneeling in his golden robes to Our Lady, with St. John Baptist and King Edward the Confessor and St. Edmund. On the other side Our Lady and Christ, with some eleven angels, all in blue." It would appear that the small but most precious painting was kept in store, and overlooked, at the time of the great sale and dispersion of the King's collections after his execution in 1649 (new style). It reappeared at the Restoration, was a little later on—no doubt in ignorance of its true value—presented by James II. to Sir Roger Palmer, Lord Castlemaine (son of the original donor), and by the latter taken to Rome on the occasion of his mission there in 1686. Lord Castlemaine's heirs sold it to the Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, in whose family it has remained ever since —one of the most envied possessions of a house noble not only in virtue of long descent and great position, but of literary and artistic culture. The Wilton Diptych was exhibited at the Manchester Exhibition of 1857—the greatest and most wonderful display (as the catalogue of its contents proves) of art treasures that England has ever seen—and one that could not possibly be repeated. It appeared

again at the New Gallery in the winter exhibition of 1901–1902, and was there seen by the present writer in beauty and perfection unimpaired,[1] a tempera painting more dazzling in the purity and brilliance of its colouring than even the panels of Lorenzo Monaco and Fra Angelico.

The King, an ingenious youth of fifteen or sixteen years, kneels worshipping the Virgin and Child, covered with his mantle of scarlet, into which is woven throughout in gold his favourite device of the crouching hart. He wears a crown and collar of jewels, with the device of the white hart in enamel. At the back, recommending him to the mercy of the Divine personages, stand the three patron-saints: St. John the Baptist holding tenderly in one hand the Lamb, Edward the Confessor with his Ring, and St. Edmund (the Royal saint and martyr enshrined at Bury, and whose fame as hero and martyr is perpetuated in the full name of that place—Bury St. Edmunds). Behind the Precursor, and almost hidden by his figure, is some indication of a dense forest, such as we see both in early Italian and in early French Art. But on the sinister panel of the Diptych what a dazzle of pure celestial colour, what a flutter of feathered wings! What felicity undimmed by foreboding in the Madonna who stands erect holding the Divine Babe, as He—reverently and with infinite tenderness held by her—strains forward joyously to bless the youthful monarch contented now, but in the future, alas! notwithstanding this blessing, to be so wholly unblest, so wholly undone. Each blue-robed, rose-garlanded angel wears the King's device of the crouching white hart, with a collar of broom. They tread on a carpet of

[1] It has not been publicly exhibited since then.

freshest flowers—violet, daisy, rose, and columbine; such a *semis* of spring and summer blooms as we find in French missals, and, with a difference, in the paintings of those early fifteenth-century masters, Gentile da Fabriano and Pisanello.

The ingenious suggestion has been made that we may date the Diptych exactly by the number of the angels—Richard's angels wearing his own particular badge—who environ and do service to the Virgin and Child. These (as Vanderdoort has recorded) are eleven, some erect and lofty in spirituality, others more youthful and flexible, indeed almost childish in their naïveté. According to this theory the King, who succeeded his grandfather in 1377, at the age of eleven, would have been twenty-two, and the date of the painting would be 1388. For many reasons, however, this ingenious calculation will not hold water. In the first place, Richard is here not a young man of twenty-two, but a timid, smooth-faced boy of fifteen or sixteen. In the next, if he had been married at the time, we should have had not a diptych, but a triptych, with representation, on the opposite wing, of the Queen, Anne of Bohemia, with her own particular patron saints, with her device or *impresa*. No; the Diptych must have been painted not in the year 1388, but before 1382, the date of the marriage with Anne. Far more plausible, and, indeed, with much to recommend it, is the surmise (made in the catalogue of the Exhibition of Early English Portraiture, held at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1909) that the Diptych was a votive painting, intended to commemorate the King's visit to the shrine of Our Lady in the Pew, at St. Stephen's, Westminster, on Saturday, June 15, 1381, before riding out to Smithfield to

quell Wat Tyler's formidable insurrection. Or, to put it otherwise, the Diptych may have been offered by the boy King to the Blessed Virgin in gratitude for the victory achieved over the rebels; much as more than a hundred years later Federigo Gonzaga dedicated to the Madonna the great altar-piece by Mantegna, known as the "Vierge de la Victoire", in thanksgiving for his victory over the French in the serio-comic combat of Fornovo.

And now we come to the great question which has ever divided, and, as will be seen, still divides critics and connoisseurs. To what school of painting does the Wilton Diptych belong? Is it English, French, Italian, or Bohemian? The most competent authorities have held the most diverse opinions on the subject, especially since the Diptych was publicly exhibited at the Manchester Exhibition of 1857. In the dark ages of criticism I believe —though I cannot be quite confident—that the name of Fra Angelico was pronounced! Passavant unreservedly accepted the work as of Italian origin; Waagen oscillated between the Italian and Bohemian schools; Sir J. C. Robinson and Sir A. W. Franks declared themselves for the school of Bohemia having its centre at Prague; other connoisseurs, when the Diptych was at Manchester, pronounced for an English origin. An attempt to obtain the painting for the Exposition des Primitifs Français, held at Paris in 1904, failed, the then Lord Pembroke being unwilling to send his treasure across the seas; but some French critics of high authority, in summing up the results of this great display, claimed the Diptych confidently for the French or, rather, the Franco-Flemish school. W. H. J. Weale, I think, went farther, and pronounced the name of the famous

painter and sculptor André Beauneveu, of Valenciennes—the master whose name, with much more reason, Mr. S. C. Cockerell and Mr. Roger Fry have attached to the colossal full-length of Richard II. enthroned, which is exhibited in the choir of Westminster Abbey.

Until this French Exhibition came to dispel his illusions, the writer of these notes had maintained the opinion that the author of the Diptych was a Frenchman, strongly influenced by Italian art, but preserving nevertheless a distinct individuality. First there must be disallowed the contention that we have here an example of the late fourteenth-century Bohemian school, which combined elements of Italian art with elements of Teutonic. Probably such a classification would not have been hazarded but for the marriage of the King with Anne of Bohemia. The Bohemian painters of this period, as we see them in the gallery of Prague and elsewhere in Bohemia, are broader, coarser, grander, and more hieratic in style. Though the Diptych shows some features that remind the beholder of Italian Trecento and even early Quattrocento art, it is hardly necessary to discuss at length the arguments of those who have deemed it to be of Italian origin. Undoubtedly in the figures of the three male saints, on the sinister wing, we find traces of the Sienese style, and are especially reminded of Simone Martini, the great master—Giotto's contemporary and rival—who painted much at Avignon, at the Court of the Popes, and died there. One of his finest paintings, and probably his last, is the wonderful "Christ found by His Parents in the Temple", which is the chief ornament of the Roscoe Collection in the Liverpool Gallery. This Sienese influence pervades,

however, the entire French and Franco-Flemish art of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century. We find it in Malouel, in Broederlam, above all in the unique "Très-Riches Heures de Jean, duc de Berry", painted by Pol de Limbourg and his brothers before 1416. Several of the most important pages in this the finest book of hours in existence are, however, distinctly Florentine in style, one of them being freely adapted from a fresco by Taddeo Gaddi, in the Church of Santa Croce. The figures of the young King and his three patron saints are remarkable for their unmistakably British type and aspect. They must have been painted in England, and from sturdy, naïve, wondering English models. I can find little or no trace of Sienese, or indeed Italian, influence in the dexter wing. It must be borne in mind that between all the European schools at this particular moment—the last quarter of the fourteenth century—there is up to a certain point, but not beyond, an inter-connection; one, vague and general, however, upon which it would be unwise to base a definite attribution, whether to individual or school. I must own that at present the balance of opinion is in favour of an ascription of the Wilton Diptych to the French school. The author or authors of the Preface to the catalogue of the Exhibition of Early British Portraiture (already cited) strongly favour this view, basing their opinion on resemblance, real or fancied, to works, undoubtedly of the French or Franco-Flemish school, which were exhibited at Paris in 1904. They rely also upon the undoubted fact that the intercourse between the Court of Richard II. and the French Princes was frequent and close, and surmise that painters may have been summoned from France to England at

the time of Richard's Coronation, or of his marriage in 1382. Such a painter—they submit—may have executed the paintings of the Coronation in the "Liber Regalis" at Westminster Abbey, as well as the Wilton Diptych.

Notwithstanding the weight of opinion in the other direction, I must record my very strong conviction, acquired since the French Exhibition of 1904, that the Diptych is the work of an English painter working in England. In the whole of that Exposition des Primitifs Français there was nothing that intimately corresponded, whether in style or mode of conception, to the works of the French school, or schools, so copiously illustrated on that memorable occasion. Nothing more divergent in style from the Diptych than the celebrated "Parement de Narbonne" of the Louvre—that altar-front painted about 1530 in dark outline upon white silk—could well be imagined. We find the style of the latter reflected and developed considerably later on in the works of Gentile da Fabriano and Pisanello. And who will seriously assert that the freer and more monumental style of André Beauneveu at all resembles the more naïve and local style of the painter of the Diptych? Can anything at all closely corresponding in style to the Diptych be cited among the works of Jean Malouel, or Melchior Broederlam, or Jacquemart de Hesdin; or by the Master of the Livre d'Heures du Maréchal de Boucicaut (Jacques Coene?), whose *magnum opus* is now in the Jacquemart-André Museum; or by the greatest of all the Franco-Flemish miniaturists, among those who preceded the Van Eycks? I refer to the Brothers de Limbourg. Is there among extant works of the French school anything that

can seriously be pronounced to be by the same hand, or even in the same manner, as the Wilton Diptych? Notwithstanding certain general resemblances, to which I have already referred, my answer is categorically in the negative.

Let us bear in mind, in the first place, that at this particular moment English painting had reached a high level of perfection. It was about 1350 that the walls of St. Stephen's Chapel, at Westminster, were adorned with paintings (entrusted to Hugh, of St. Albans, as master-craftsman), showing the "Adoration of the Magi", and, in a row below this scene, portraits of Edward III. and Queen Philippa, with their sons and daughters. These are mentioned here, not as revealing any close community of style with the by some thirty years later Wilton Diptych, but as constituting a record of achievement, remarkable of its kind, by English artists. The technique of the Diptych, extraordinarily perfect as it is in its way, is quite English, though it is also, it must be owned, French. We have seen that the figures of the three saints and the young monarch have a surprisingly English character, such as we should search for in vain in any work by a French Primitive. But it is in the sinister wing that is to be found the strongest evidence in favour of an English origin. The types of the Angels, with their heads of excessive length in relation to their slender bodies, with their smooth domed foreheads, are essentially English, and such as we find in minor sculptures, and, above all, in ivories, of well-recognized English origin. Where in French art, whether it be painting or sculpture, can we find anything parallel to these strange yet spiritual figures, marked by an awkwardness and angularity which but adds to

their charm? Students of the period, and of this beautiful work, which stands alone among the paintings belonging to it, must answer, each for himself, in accordance with the impression which they may have received. Once more—speaking for myself alone—I must record the very strong conviction that the Wilton Diptych is English. And this can but add to its value, historical and artistic, and to the despair of those who have at heart the best interests of their country, even at the rumour that it may very possibly be sold and made over to the foreigner. For to him it can mean little beyond a fresh humiliation of England, a fresh victory of the golden terror, that is remorselessly beating down and overwhelming all resistance to its annihilating force. Morally, if not legally, the Wilton Diptych belongs to the nation, and it is clear that without due warning, without a sufficient delay to be accorded to those who would save it for England, it should not, it must not, be sold and torn from its resting-place, to cross the Atlantic, or find its way to the capital of the German Empire.

XVII

LEONARDO DA VINCI'S "LAST SUPPER"

LEONARDO DA VINCI—"THE LAST SUPPER."

S. Maria delle Grazie, Milan.

LEONARDO DA VINCI'S "LAST SUPPER"

An event of the first importance in the world of art—and, indeed, something more than this—is the resuscitation of this world-famous masterpiece in the Refectory of S. Maria delle Grazie at Milan, which after long and anxious deliberations by a committee specially appointed for the purpose, and consisting of the most eminent architects, technical experts and art critics of North Italy, was undertaken by the late Signor Luigi Cavenaghi, of Milan (the most accomplished and at the same time the most prudent of picture-doctors and picture-restorers), and was by him, unaided, carried to a completely and unexpectedly successful conclusion. On October 1, 1908, the doors of the refectory were again opened to the public, and visitors were enabled to judge for themselves—as the special committee and the official world had already done—of the surprising results obtained by the simplest and most legitimate means.[1] To Signor Cavenaghi this had been an undertaking of a responsibility so enormous that it required the greatest courage, the greatest calm, and the greatest conviction to face the alarming possibilities of the situation. Imagine the outcry that would have rent the very skies had complete ruin enveloped the painting, which even in its wrecked and defaced condition the world had ever deemed one of its

[1] In 1924 portions of this "Last Supper" were restored once more; this time by Professor Silvestri.

greatest treasures—which had made of the bare, austere refectory which holds it one of the places of pilgrimage that even the most conventional and perfunctory of sightseers cannot approach without a certain awe. Imagine the undying hatred and scorn with which the whole human race would have branded the rash restorer, who thus, with ruin in his train, should have followed upon so many others, his predecessors in the centuries since the last years of the fifteenth century, when the Florentine Leonardo, in the alien city, completed his greatest work—much as the Athenian Pheidias had, a stranger in Olympia, wrought out his Olympian Zeus, the loftiest expression of Attic art. What a chorus of execration would have greeted him who should have completed the havoc and destruction which humidity, an experimental technique, the vicissitudes of war and time, combining with neglect, and, above all, the empirical methods of successive restorers, had wrought! Cavenaghi knew what he risked, and he proceeded with the utmost caution, though at the same time with that assurance which an unrivalled experience in the various processes of Italian art of the great periods had made his.

Experiments were made by him on small and relatively unimportant spaces of the ruined yet infinitely precious work, and successfully carried to a conclusion before the great task was approached, and interruptedly pursued, until complete achievement, in a space of time relatively short, crowned assiduous labour and the most delicate skill. It should be mentioned, too, that this arduous undertaking, with its risks, sufficiently great to alarm the most confident, the most optimistic, has in every sense been to Cavenaghi a labour of love, and one in

respect of which he has refused to accept the usual professional remuneration. This, however, is, after all, a minor matter. If those who save instead of destroying human life are to be included among the heroes of modern civilization—and they are, indeed, among its greatest—shall not the man who risks professional reputation, material gain, the goodwill of his fellow-men, in an undertaking by which the whole human race will, or should, benefit—shall he not also be reckoned among the heroes of peace, among those whom contemporaries and posterity will delight to honour? As such a hero we confidently, and without fear that we shall be accused of exaggeration, rank Cavenaghi, and to him render our tribute of fervent thanks and gratitude. Let us remember, too, in this tribute a hero of a very different type—Napoleon the Great himself. When he (then General Bonaparte) entered Milan as a conqueror in 1796, his first visit was to the *Cenacolo* ("Last Supper") of Leonardo. Having reverentially considered its ruined beauties, he took the most effectual measures to preserve the refectory and the inestimable treasure which it contained from the risks of military occupation and consequent rough usage. Those who would acquaint themselves in detail with the facts connected with the decline and gradual ruin of the *Cenacolo* through humidity, rough usage, and unskilful treatment, even more than through the experimental character of the master's technique, should, if they can, procure the interesting pamphlet "Vicende del Cenacolo Vinciano", by Signor Luca Beltrami, the noted Milanese architect and connoisseur, and should, above all, peruse the appendix to this booklet, in which Cavenaghi himself has, in a few simple,

modest sentences, recorded his experiments, the definite grapple with his great task, as well as the admirable, and as it is confidently believed, permanent results achieved.[1]

The great painting was, as we now know, commenced by Leonardo in 1495, and finished about 1497, so that he cannot be accused in this crowning instance of the excessive delays generally associated with his name and with this work. Almost universally believed hitherto has been the legend that Leonardo painted, not in true fresco, but in oil colours, on the walls of the refectory, and that to this cause is primarily to be ascribed the early decay and partial effacement of the "Last Supper". Cavenaghi absolutely denied and disproved this story, one of the most unreservedly accepted of all the legends which have gathered around the names of the great masters. The *Cenacolo* is painted, not, indeed, in *buon fresco* on the moistened plaster of the wall, but in tempera—a process employed in Italy, not only in the execution of panel pictures, but as a complementary process, in that of many mural decorations of the monumental order. That Leonardo, the greatest, the most untiring of all experimentalists, may have essayed innovations on the received tempera technique is, all the same, easily believable, and to this temerity the decay which so soon set in may partially be ascribed. Yet the chief causes that operated to bring about this disastrous result so soon after the execution of the work were, it would appear, humidity, imperfect preparation of surfaces, cross-currents of air, dust, and impurities of atmosphere generated in a confined space constantly used as a refectory by a large number of

[1] In his "Relazione sul consolidamento eseguito al dipinto in 1908".

human beings. The Cardinal of Aragon, visiting S. Maria delle Grazie during the lifetime of Leonardo (whom he had recently met in the suite of Francis I. at Amboise), wrote of the *Cenacolo* as "most admirable, but already beginning to decay, through humidity, or some other cause". Vasari saw the famous painting in 1566, and in the second edition of his "Lives of Artists" (1568) described it as already in a lamentable state. This is not the place to repeat in detail the accounts and the well-justified complaints of artists and travellers who continued through the centuries to visit the shrine of the defaced and partially obliterated yet still famous "Last Supper". To some of these it appeared a ghost—nay, as in parts already non-existent. And then successive restorers, none of them truly in sympathy with the work or with the school of which it was the supreme expression, had their wicked way with the *Cenacolo*; first Bellotti, and then Mazza, and then Barezzi. It was the process employed in 1726 by the first-named of these empirics which most contributed to impart to the much-tinkered and tormented masterpiece the look of a painting executed in oils. During the last hundred years or more the students of Leonardo, the ardent worshippers of all that is greatest in Italian art, have done their best to divine the extinguished glories of the painting beneath its ruins. Others have enthusiastically praised—*de confiance*, as our neighbours have it, without really perceiving. Others still—and these, perhaps, the most reverential of all—have abstained from gazing upon that which they could not contemplate without infinite pain, and have contented themselves with studying Leonardo's drawings for the *Cenacolo*, in the Royal

Library at Windsor, in the Accademia at Venice, and elsewhere, and together with them the life-size drawings from many of the heads, made by immediate pupils and followers; the most important of these being the great series at Weimar, in connection with which the name of Solario has been pronounced, and that one, less extensive but of finer quality, which is now in the Municipal Gallery at Strasburg, where, not without plausibility, it is ascribed to Boltraffio.

Of the many painted copies the best known are that in the Louvre, by Leonardo's mannered imitator, Marco d' Oggiono, and the copies which are preserved, with the originals, in the Refectory of S. Maria delle Grazie itself, the best of which (a good picture enough, but a poor thing indeed in comparison with the original!) is tentatively given to Solario. But by far the best copy extant, though not the best known, is that vast one which is preserved in the Diploma Gallery of our own Royal Academy, but extremely ill seen in the cramped, narrow gallery in which it is placed. This, too, has been generally attributed to Marco d' Oggiono: but the most competent among recent critics of the Milanese school, the late Dr. Gustavo Frizzoni, has ascribed it, on good grounds, to a more truly Leonardesque painter—Gianpetrino. It would be a wise and generous act on the part of the Royal Academy to deposit this precious canvas permanently at the National Gallery, since in its present home it is utterly lost and thrown away. But to return to the *Cenacolo* itself, as we have it now, still ruined and defaced, but for the first time seen by living man as a reality, as a work of the sublime beauty of which we may still judge; though even

now we must imagine much—too much—that is not, and imagine away too much that is—and, unfortunately, to secure the material safety of the work, must remain. For let it not be rashly assumed that Cavenaghi ventured in any way to repaint, to fill gaps, or even to remove repaints already ancient and therefore not removable without great danger to the balance of the work as a whole. What he has done is to consolidate and make level the whole surface of the work, to bring the paint everywhere into immediate contact with the *intonaco* beneath, to remove and provide against humidity, to clear away the crust of dust which has hitherto so obscured as almost to efface certain portions of the painting. Now, for the first time (Plate XVII.), we may perceive and enjoy the wonderful rhythm of the picture as a whole, its perfect balance and harmony, the composition of the figures in their own clear enveloping atmosphere; and even to a certain extent, though, alas, only very partially, the facial expression of the heads, in which we may divine, if not absolutely see in fullest revelation, the art of Leonardo at its supreme point of science, of intellectuality, of spiritualized emotion.

Moreover, above the *Cenacolo* itself is now visible, what was before only faintly to be guessed at, a painted decoration, in three lunettes and surmounting arched sections, which is, every morsel of it, from the hand of the master himself. The devices of Ludovico Sforza and Beatrice d' Este, his consort, the inscriptions, the wreaths of fruit, flowers, and leaves are executed with the utmost patience, with a skill, indeed, so exquisite in its minuteness, that the decoration does not acquire its full value until it is examined at close quarters. Thus enframed

and canopied, the *Cenacolo* acquires a fresh majesty and beauty, thus does it again take its supreme rank among masterpieces, a ruin still, a ghost even now of its former self, yet a thing of solemn, of infinite beauty, one of the greatest of all monuments of creative genius. Now, as never before since we have known it, does the "Last Supper", and with it the spirit of Leonardo, give forth something of its true meaning to the reverent seeker after the higher truth, which is the higher beauty.

The Refectory of S. Maria delle Grazie, as the temple which contains Leonardo's resuscitated masterpiece, will now more than ever be one of the shrines where those to whom is vouchsafed the inestimable gift of communion with the divine element in art will worship in solemn joy, in thanksgiving for the consolation of supreme truth and the loftiest inspiration. Such a shrine, at the mere mention of which an awe invades and envelops us, is the Parthenon. Such shrines are the Cathedrals of Chartres, and Amiens, and Rheims; such a one is the Arena of Padua, where the genius of Giotto reveals itself to the full; such a one, too, the Church of St. Bavon, at Ghent, where glows and vibrates the beauty, visual and spiritual, of Hubert and Jan van Eyck's altar-piece, "The Adoration of the Lamb" (Plate XVIII.), completed once again by its wings, more wonderful in quiet intensity than even the centre itself. The art of Leonardo in spiritualized passion, in absolute serenity, is apart from all the rest comparable with nothing contemporary or of later date. The sublimity of Michelangelo overwhelms and crushes us in the Sistine Chapel, as in the Tombs of the Medici princes; the divine suavity of Raphael soothes and lifts us in the "Cartoons" and in the

Stanze of the Vatican. If in the later time we would surrender ourselves wholly to the spiritual joy of communion with that element of the divine in art, which, when all has been probed and dissected, remains the one thing indescribable, the note of sphere-music that only the few may hear, we must turn to Rembrandt. We must look upon some simple scene of the great Sacred Drama rendered anew by him—to the "Pilgrims at Emmaus" or the "Noli me Tangere". We must gaze through the rugged human envelope into the very soul of the aged man or woman, time-marred and broken, whom he shows patiently and wonderingly awaiting the end, when this ruggedness and this decay will be merged and transformed into something of purest radiance. Let no man be ashamed, but rather let him rejoice if in the contemplation of these great things, in which the divine element of the human is revealed, in which supreme art is at the service of supreme genius, he trembles and his eyes grow dim—if, arguing, weighing, criticizing no longer, but filled with wonder and with a great joy, he is moved to sink to his knees, in thanksgiving—for the greatness of these gifts, of this supreme revelation, this supreme consolation afforded by Man to Man.

XVIII

THE "ADORATION OF THE LAMB", AT GHENT

Photo. Medici Society.

HUBERT AND JOHN VAN EYCK—"THE ADORATION OF THE LAMB."

The Polyptych, open. St. Bavon, Ghent.

THE "ADORATION OF THE LAMB", AT GHENT

I

THE "Adoration of the Lamb" (Plate XVIII.), by Hubert and Jan van Eyck, is the first and greatest masterpiece of fifteenth-century painting produced in Flanders; the greatest and most original monument of Christian art that Northern Europe has to show; perhaps the most sublime creation of fifteenth-century art altogether.

The invention in the main of Hubert van Eyck —the greater genius—but continued and carried to completion by Jan van Eyck—the greater craftsman—this world-famous polyptych, set up in the chapel founded by Jodocus Vydt in the Church of St. Bavon, at Ghent, in the year 1432, is still, as all the world knows, in existence—and, considering the vicissitudes through which it has passed, in a fine state of preservation. But it is no longer to be found in its entirety at St. Bavon.[1] There, of the original altar-piece, are preserved only the great central panels. The wings — if possible, more wonderful and certainly better preserved than these —are in the Kaiser-Friedrich Museum of Berlin. The life-size figures of Adam and Eve, in the later years deemed by the clergy too frankly and realistically nude for a church, have been transferred

[1] That statement is contained in the *Daily Telegraph* of December 31, 1917. All the portions of the triptych were subsequently reassembled, as is noted below. See also "A Lost Altarpiece", by Sir Claude Phillips, published on September 4, 1914.

to the Brussels Gallery, of which they are now the crowning adornment.

At this moment, when all are trembling for the safety of Belgium's masterpieces, and some paintings of high rank have already, it is believed, been engulfed and swept away in the whirlwind of flame and horror, it is not superfluous to recall these well-known facts. At Ghent the original centre of the altar-piece is completed with the wings of the copy made by the Flemish painter, Michael Coxcie, at the command of Philip II. of Spain; at Berlin the original wings are completed with the central panels of this same decoratively effective though insufficient sixteenth-century copy; in the Alte Pinakothek of Munich are preserved the remaining panels of Coxcie's work, the "Blessed Virgin" and "St. John the Baptist".

Let us for a moment imagine the "Adoration" as it was when it first shone in radiance undimmed upon the citizens of the great merchant city of Ghent. Above, in the centre, is enthroned in hieratic majesty God the Father, sceptred and wearing the triple tiara, with a marvellously wrought open crown of jewels at His feet; at His right, golden-haired, azure-robed, crowned with jewels and lilies, and above these, with stars, is seated Mary, here both Virgin immaculate and Queen of Heaven; at His left appears St. John the Baptist, no longer the Precursor, haggard and spent with fervent exhortation, but here, as he is described on the altar-piece itself, "The Equal of the Angels; the Voice of the Apostles". And then on the left are seen the Singing Angels, celestial choristers robed in brocade of red and gold, their brows knit with a painful rapture as they pour

forth their full-throated song of praise. On the right is an Angel draped in a resplendent mantle of black-and-gold brocade, playing on the organ, while others in concert draw sweet music from viol and harp.

On either side of these groups are the First Parents after the Fall—wholly undraped figures depicted with unflinching realism and yet with infinite pathos. They are naked and ashamed, yet consoled already, and expectant of the Divine mercy. These figures, misunderstood by the later ages, and most unwisely banished, are the keynote of the whole, the basis upon which rises the sublime superstructure, until it lifts its topmost pinnacle to the heavens. But it is in the panels of the lower range that Hubert van Eyck's invention culminates. Here he has realized, with a poetry greater still than his astonishing technical skill, a vision as fair, as radiant, as holy, as any that ever gladdened mortal eye. In the upper zone it is the Human, mitigating and making comprehensible the Divine, that moves and subdues the onlooker; in the lower zone it is the Divine in the Human, not so much smoothing out the ruggedness of man, or mitigating the agony of his wrestling, as making visible through this ruggedness the soft glow of the Divine light, and showing it thus transfigured, lifted to a higher, a more essential truth. The following is the passage in Revelation that these, the greatest masters of Flanders, have taken as the central theme and basis of their work: "*And he showed me a pure river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and*

yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him. And they shall see His face; and His name shall be on their foreheads. And there shall be no night there. . . ."

In the centre of the middle panel is set up the Altar of the Lamb, adored by white-robed angels; and toward it, across the flower-jewelled sward, stream through groves of orange and myrtle, of olive and cypress and palm, on the one hand the virgins, on the other the male saints, who have suffered martyrdom.[1] In the foreground are, on the one side, those who have given premonition of Christ, "kneeling prophets with upheld open books, doctors, philosophers, princes", but some of them still wrestling with themselves, half-averted from, half-drawn towards the altar. On the other side are the Apostles, kneeling in adoration; and withdrawn a little way from them, a great company of magnificently robed saints, of triple-crowned popes, of mitred bishops and ecclesiastics.

But in the subject of the wings Hubert van Eyck has risen to a height of inspiration still greater. On the left hand of the spectator advance, lance in hand, on noble, well-disciplined war-horses, the Soldiers of Christ, splendidly armed, and their youthful brows chapleted with leaves: St. Martin, St. George, and St. Sebastian, as by some they have been named. As they move onwards in slow, reverential progress, their eyes are filled with a solemn gladness, with a steadfastness of worship that no speech can translate. For now on earth and among men is Peace

[1] Cp. p. 201.

for all time, and these Christian heroes, strong to do and to suffer, will no more need sword or lance, helm or mail. Behind them, richly robed and even in their uprightness of more worldly aspect, ride the Just Judges. On the right hand of the spectator advance through a rocky gorge the bearded, rugged Hermits, a group moving with halting steps, gazing with eyes dazzled, worshipping in awe and in amazement; last in their train coming St. Mary Magdalene and St. Mary of Egypt, two sinners, now repentant and washed clean by the Divine love. And next to these march onwards, confident and with resolute step, the Pilgrims, led by St. Christopher, a gigantic figure covered with a red mantle.

The keynote of the whole great work—a sacred painting, a sacred poem, unapproached in the art of its time—is the Divine promise of eternal Peace, answered by Man with trustfulness, worship, and thanksgiving.

It is, perhaps, too soon, while this blackness, shot with awful lights, canopies and obscures the heavens, while this hideous, brazen clangour deafens the peoples of the earth, to formulate a hope, to utter a prayer. But is it not meet that this, the great masterpiece, the great central light of Flemish art, should be restored, as far as may be possible, to its pristine shape[1] in its chapel at St. Bavon? As thus reconstituted would it not stand forth, a memorial nobler far than any other that could be imagined, to the heroism of the Belgian people—a heroism that neither Spartan nor Athenian, that neither Fleming nor Dutchman in the great past, that neither Frenchman nor Briton in the great present has surpassed?

[1] Since these lines were written by Sir Claude Phillips, his view has been carried into effect.

To the centre of the "Adoration", which remains at Ghent, Brussels would willingly yield up the "Adam" and "Eve"; and the Kaiser-Friedrich Museum of Berlin might in the future be made to see the propriety of restoring to scarred and maimed yet ever lion-hearted Belgium the wings of the marvellous altar-piece, which should never have been detached from the centre, or allowed to leave the church for which they were painted.[1] Then would the worshipper, kneeling in this chapel of St. Bavon that human genius has made one of the places of pilgrimage of the world, look up once more, see on the right and left of the Eternal the angels making music and pouring forth an ecstasy of song. Then would the "Adam" and "Eve" once more symbolize human sin, Divine chastisement, and Divine forgiveness. Then would once more the Soldiers of Christ and the Just Judges, the Hermits and the Pilgrims, meet the gaze as they advance rapt in an atmosphere of solemn gladness, of shining peace, to worship at the Altar of the Lamb. And then would be remembered the promise contained in these words, the most beautiful, the most heart-searching of all that are written in Revelation: "*They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light upon them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*"

[1] The panels formerly at Berlin have been restored to Ghent.

Photo. Medici Society.

HUBERT AND JOHN VAN EYCK—"THE ADORATION OF THE LAMB."

The Polyptych, closed. St. Bavon, Ghent.

II

A STERN act of justice[1] has been accomplished, a most important, although to the many it may seem a minor, article of the Treaty between the Allies and Germany has been carried into effect. As briefly announced in the *Daily Telegraph* yesterday, the present writer has received official notification from M. Paul Lambotte, that on July 3 Germany surrendered, and actually handed over to the Belgian Government, the wings of the great "Adoration of the Lamb", painted by Hubert and Jan van Eyck for the Cathedral of St. Bavon at Ghent, and the wings of the polyptych, "The Last Supper", by Dierick Bouts, of which the central panel, "The Last Supper", until lately in the Church of St. Pierre at Louvain, was at first believed to have been engulfed when ruin and destruction overtook the peaceful university city. In this respect, at any rate, Germany has been true to her engagements. Effect has been given to a stipulation which to those who have devoted their lives to the building up, step by step, of the Kaiser-Friedrich Museum and the other galleries of Germany must have caused an agony bitter as death itself. The wings of the altar-piece of Dierick Bouts are treasures of the first order; but the wings of the "Adoration of the Lamb", informed with a more divine spirituality than even the four central panels (though these are of the very essence of the subject) are the choicest

[1] This article on the "Adoration of the Lamb" appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* of July 8, 1920, under the title of "Surrendered Masterpieces: Germany's Amends".

art treasures of Prussia and one of the most sublime monuments of human genius. To take these from the Kaiser-Friedrich Museum is to tear out its very heart; well-deserved as it is, such a punishment, even by the most unrelenting, may be deemed sufficient. To those who must endure this agony of separation we will not refuse a word of pity, although our rejoicing is without measure at this wonderful and unhoped-for consummation, for which we have so ardently prayed. Who in the past years would have ventured to hope that the world would see the scattered panels of the "Adoration" once more brought together; the central panel taken from St. Bavon, the wings from Berlin, the Adam and Eve —already in the Brussels Gallery—united to these?

In justice to Germany it must be pointed out that neither the great Van Eycks nor the panels by Dierick Bouts were in any way war booty. They were bought with good, solid thalers—the Van Eyck panels, as far back as 1821, those by Dierick Bouts much later, but still a great number of years ago. It has been stated, but quite erroneously, that the "Adoration of the Lamb" was among the art treasures carried away by Napoleon I. The four central panels were taken to Paris by the French Republicans in 1794, and there exhibited in the Central Museum of Art. The six shutter-panels (those until recently in Berlin) were for safety stored in the Hôtel de Ville, and although claimed by Denon, the director of the Central Museum, were not ceded, thanks to the firmness of the bishop, M. Fallot de Beaumont. After the battle of Waterloo many precious works of art were restored to Belgium, and among them these four central panels. In 1816 they were replaced over the altar,

in the chapel at St. Bavon. Most unluckily, the wings were not replaced, owing, it is said, to a prejudice at the time against shutters. The Vicar-General, M. Le Surre, and the church-wardens (who for so doing have deserved and incurred eternal infamy) seized the opportunity offered by this temporary detachment and sold them for 3000 florins to the dealer, L. J. Nieuwenhuys, who sold them to the banker Solly, by whom they were ceded to the Prussian Government at the price of 400,000 francs.[1] The two upright panels, showing respectively Adam and Eve in absolute nudity, were in 1861 made over to the Belgian Government and hung in the Brussels Gallery.

The twelve panels now ceded by the Kaiser-Friedrich Museum are: "The Just Judges", "The Knights of Christ", "The Singing Angels", "The Music-Making Angels", "The Holy Hermits", "St. John the Baptist", "The Archangel Gabriel", "The Blessed Virgin", the Donors, Jodocus Vyt and Elizabeth Borluut, "St. John the Evangelist", and four minor panels (Plate XIX.). The sublime conception in its entirety belongs, as we hold, to Hubert, the exalted genius, to whom also the actual painting of the lower range of panels may in the main be ascribed. To Jan van Eyck, the ardent, penetrating realist, is attributable much work in the upper range of panels, and the finishing in every part of the great masterpiece. Art more brightly glowing with inspiration than that which has given us "The Soldiers of Christ", "The Holy Hermits", and those two sinners, washed clean by the Blood of Christ, St. Mary Magdalene and St. Mary of

[1] W. H. James Weale and M. W. Brockwell, *The Van Eycks and their Art*, 1912, p. 38.

Egypt, the world has not to show. The "Adoration of the Lamb" is once more what it was destined to be, the symbolical representation of Peace, of a harmony of the Divine and the Human, that is, and ever is to be, indissoluble. It stands now as the most perfect monument that can be imagined of Belgium's heroism in the greatest moment of the world's history—of the union of the Powers of Light against the Powers of Darkness.

Passing from the Van Eycks to Dierick Bouts, we sink to a much lower level; and yet the polyptych of the latter, "The Last Supper", now reconstituted as it originally appeared in the church of St. Pierre, for which it was painted in 1467, is one of the most important examples extant of primitive Flemish art. Bouts, in his intensity that has no emotional warmth, in the force and grimness of his veracity, is midway between tragic Roger van der Weyden on the one hand and suave Memling on the other. The central panel of the reconstituted polyptych—a prosaic representation of the Last Supper—shows, somewhat withdrawn from the chief dramatis personæ, Bouts's own portrait. The wings that have now come from Berlin are "Elijah in the Desert", acquired in 1834 from the Bettendorf collection at Aix-la-Chapelle, and "The Passover Feast", from the same collection. The two panels surrendered by the Alte Pinakothek, of Munich, are "Abraham greeted by Melchisedec" and "The Israelites gathering Manna", both from the Boisserée collection.

M. Paul Lambotte, proud of this wonderful reconstitution of masterpiece, in which he has had so great a share, announces that an epoch-making exhibition will be held, of which they will be the

centre.[1] Whether they will stand in splendid isolation, or there will be grouped around them other great productions of the Netherlandish schools, is not at present clear. Our dream is of these noble works, that the humbled foe has in penitence yielded up, surrounded by other masterpieces second only to them in beauty and significance. Thus we might have from Bruges the Memlings of St. John's Hospital and the Van Eycks of the little Municipal Gallery; from Antwerp the "Descent from the Cross", by Quentin Matsys; from the Uffizi the "Adoration of the Shepherds", by Hugo van der Goes (the greatest example of primitive Flemish art next to the "Adoration of the Lamb"). To these world-famous pieces we would add the "Last Judgment", by Roger van der Weyden, in the little Hospice of Beaune; the "Last Judgment" by Memling, now or lately in a church at Danzig, and of which, by the way, nothing has of late been heard; and the "Virgin and Child with Angels and Saints", by Gerard David, now in the Rouen Gallery. We might ourselves contribute as a great exception, from the National Gallery, the "Jean Arnolphini and his Wife", by Jan van Eyck, and the "Adoration of the Magi" by Mabuse. Thus would be realized the most august and glorious display that could well be imagined of the primitive art of the North, speaking to the beholder in tenderness, in consolation, of peace and goodwill among men, now and evermore.

[1] The official ceremony for the reconstitution was held in the Brussels Gallery on August 15, 1920, when many of the other Flemish pictures in the collection were rehung. A "Journée van Eyck" was observed at Ghent on October 4, 1920.

DATES OF ARTICLES

Daily Telegraph:

The Nativity in Art . . . . 25 Dec. 1896

The Art Journal:

What the Brush cannot paint . . . Jan. 1900

Daily Telegraph:

Children in Art . . . . . 25 Dec. 1901

North American Review:

The Quality of Emotion in Modern Art . March 1902

Daily Telegraph:

Joy in Art (I.) . . . . . 25 Dec. 1903
Joy in Art (II.) . . . . . 26 Dec. 1903
Vandalism in Art . . . . 13 July 1907
The "Last Supper" . . . . 5 Oct. 1908
Great Painters by Themselves . . 18 Dec. 1909
Love in Art . . . . . 30 April 1910
Plagiarism in Art . . . . 15 May 1910
Death in Art . . . . . 28 May 1910
The Sublime in Art (I.) . . . 8 Nov. 1910
The Sublime in Art (II.) . . . 26 Nov. 1910
Spring in Art . . . . . 20 Feb. 1911
Great Pageants in Art . . . . 5 July 1911
Dancing in Art (I.) . . . . 24 July 1911
Dancing in Art (II.) . . . . 5 Aug. 1911
Music in Art (I.) . . . . 26 July 1913
Music in Art (II.) . . . . 5 Aug. 1913
The Wilton Diptych . . . . 17 Feb. 1914
The "Adoration of the Lamb" (I.) . . 31 Dec. 1917
The "Adoration of the Lamb" (II.) . . 8 July 1920

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